

THE FIGHTER IN BONDAGE: REVOLUTIONARY-NATIONALISM
IN GERMANY. 1914-1933.

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"Negations are not Contraries."

William Blake.

SUMMARY

This thesis is a historical and intellectual study of a political movement in Germany known as revolutionary-nationalism. The movement had its origins in the First World War, gathered strength during the early twenties, but finally disintegrated in 1933 after the National Socialist seizure of power. Attention is focussed initially on the pre-war background to the development of the movement and in particular to the Prussian tradition. Then there is an analysis, using memoirs and other revolutionary-nationalist literature, of the formative influence of the war-experience on the movement. An account of post-war German nationalism starting with the Freikorps and continuing with the rise of the Nazi party provides the setting for the study of an emergent ideology of revolutionary-nationalism. The chief intellectual figures of the movement are the subject of close textual analysis. These include Ernst Juenger, the most important figure, Carl Schmitt, Hans Zehrer, Franz Schauwecker, Frederic Hielscher, Werner Best, Ernst Niekisch and Ernst von Salomon.

Their writings are related to general currents in German social thought and German philosophy, including the sociology of knowledge and Nietzsche's philosophy of the will-to-power. Special emphasis is laid upon Hans Zehrer's political sociology and Ernst Juenger's theory of technology. The relations

between the revolutionary-nationalists and the Nazi party are discussed, and in particular their respective attitudes towards political mobilisation. The thesis concludes with a study of the impact of revolutionary-nationalist thought in the post-war world upon the controversy over the nature of modern technology.

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CHAPTER I

Before 1914

The other face of fascism in Germany from 1914 to 1933 was revolutionary nationalism. It was a minority movement of ex-front soldiers and intellectuals which stood in close proximity to the Nazi movement. Its ambivalent and often confused relationship to the Nazis has been seized upon by some critics as evidence that its idea of a conservative revolution placed it as a firm opponent of Nazism.¹ The fact that one segment of the movement called itself national-bolshevist has prompted others to see it as totally anti-fascist.² Even in the invaluable political history of the movement by Otto Ernst Schueddekopf,³ there is a distinct exaggeration of its ideological affinity with German communism and the left in general, but its ideology was both anti-democratic and anti-Marxist. Although it did stand between the Nazi and Communist parties, it was to the former rather than the latter, that it generally gravitated. For this reason the label of fascism is a very apt one. It is even more apt when we realise two important things. European fascism was at no time a homogeneous phenomenon. Political movements adopting 'fascist' labels differed considerably both in their goals and their organisation. The societies in which fascist regimes in the inter-war years came to power differed considerably with regard both their economies and their social structure.⁴ German national-socialism was no more the prototype of 'fascism' than Mussolini's Italian fascism. The second crucial factor is this. The dimension of

totalitarianism cuts across the distinction between fascism and communism.⁵ In addition if there is a case, as James Gregor has suggested,⁶ for regarding Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia and Mussolini's Italy as developmental dictatorships, not only does the homogeneous image of fascism become faintly absurd, the distinction between fascism and communism itself becomes highly blurred. In fact the proponents of German revolutionary-nationalism themselves exploited the insecure and potentially dissoluble nature of these conceptual boundaries by claiming to see virtue in all three movements. At the same time they saw them as being initially separate and autonomous. If it was possible to see similarities between Italian fascism and German Nazism, it was also possible to see connections between the former and Russian Bolshevism. Without ever claiming allegiance to any of three movements, revolutionary-nationalism, at different times and in different contexts showed favour towards all of them. It was a movement of fascist intellectuals whose own ideology testifies to the pitfalls and the inadequacies of the indiscriminate use of the 'fascist' label. This having been said, it is a movement which was by its historical nature a component of German fascism. The intellectuals who dominated the movement were the articulate exponents, not only of an attack upon humanitarianism and the idea of progress, but of a doctrine of the radical evil of human nature. Implicit in their view of man and society was the presupposition of the inability or failure of modern man to improve either his own or his social condition. At its most extreme, as in the work of its central figure, Ernst Juenger, it became an apology for contempt, despair and slavery.

The social basis of its value-attitudes resided, in a very clear

and singular manner, in the war experience of a whole generation of junior German officers. This was the so-called front generation which survived the Great War. Trained in a severely authoritarian and militaristic Prussian tradition, many acquired in combat a gruesome appetite for murder and violence which outlived the termination of the war itself. In the brutal exploits of the Freikorps, the post-war volunteers, and later the private armies of Nazism, Germany was to reap the harvest of this unquenchable appetite. The clearest insight into the psychology of a mass violence later to sweep through Europe in a devastating fashion, is to be found in the writings of the revolutionary-nationalists. For the latter, composed of many veterans of the front, claimed to embody the spirit of the war-experience in their own writings and activities. Their political goals which often differed from the Nazis for doctrinal reasons were derived from attitudes which had an identical root - the capitulation to the attractions of mass slaughter and anoral brutality.

The central intellectual figure in the revolutionary-nationalist movement is Ernst Juenger, war-hero and holder of the coveted *pour-le-mérite*. Juenger presented that rare example of man-of-action turned thinker, of fighter turned dialectician. Despite differences in historical and political circumstances, he can on this particular count be compared to such diverse figures as T. E. Lawrence, André Malraux or Che Guevara. His politics were moulded by the nature of the war in which he was involved. His war-diaries, published in Germany throughout the twenties, became best-selling literature. Unlike many of his less literate front-

contemporaries he was a master of literary style and something of an unofficial spokesman for their soldierly life-style. Juenger was at the centre of a fairly loose and amorphous intellectual circle which included his brother and poet, Friedrich Georg Juenger; Carl Schmitt, the brilliant young political theorist renowned for his attacks on the Weimar constitution and the parliamentary system; Ernst Niekisch, one-time minister in the Bavarian Soviet Republic, who was the leading national-bolshevist in Germany; and many others including Franz Schauwecker, a fellow-front writer, and younger disciples of the post-war era including Frederic Hiescher, Ernst von Salomon and Werner Best. In close proximity to Juenger's circle stood the editorial board of the magazine Die Tat, whose editor and leading writer Hans Zehrer provided an important intellectual forum for young nationalists. Although revolutionary-nationalism as a whole was much wider and more fragmentary in its organisation and nature these were the men who gave it its predominantly intellectual emphasis.

Despite the importance of Germany's fascist intellectuals to the understanding of fascism, it would be true to say that nowhere else in Europe was there as great a scepticism to the mass fascist movement by intellectuals of similar political persuasion as in Germany. There was no German equivalent of any stature to Giovanni Gentile's "Manifesto of fascist intellectuals" at Bologna in 1924. Apart from Gottfried Benn, there were no Nazi supporters with the literary credentials of French fascists such as Henri de Montherlant, Drieu la Rochelle, Louis Ferdinand Celine or Robert Brasillach. Mussolini could attract personal allegiance from men such as Gabriele D'Annunzio and F.T. Marinetti and the leader of Action Française,

Charles Maurras was a man with an outstanding intellectual reputation. Hitler on the other hand was scarcely able to captivate the German intellectuals at all. In fact he alienated from Nazism many who might otherwise have joined. The reasons for this, as we shall see, remain central to the explanation of the political ineffectiveness and isolation of revolutionary-nationalism as an independent movement.

One important source of the divergence between the minority nationalist factions and the mass Nazi movement was the question of the Prussian state. While the Nazis admired the achievements of the Prussian state, the basis of their racialist attitudes are to be sought elsewhere. For the revolutionary-nationalists on the other hand, the core of their nationalism lay in their allegiance to Prussia - in a fundamental value attitude which we shall come to call Prussianism. Not only did this trenchant Prussian attitude mean separation from the Nazis, it also meant ultimately separation from other European fascist movements with similar nationalist attitudes. Mussolini's movement in particular which possessed many similar characteristics to revolutionary-nationalism, was often rejected by the "Prussians" as being too southern European, and infected by Romish catholic sentiments. But there is something even more fundamental than this cross-national incompatibility. Prussianism bore witness to the essentially conservative origins of revolutionary-nationalism and to that curious contradictio in adjecto - the idea of a conservative revolution.

How are we to understand this phenomenon? In its orthodox sense conservatism as a political doctrine is pledged to the conservation of what it considers are the stable and often 'natural'

characteristics of existing society. In the nineteenth century, German conservatism survived the attacks of an enlightened humanitarianism and the belief in progress to remain a doctrine committed to autocracy, tradition and order. As Klaus Epstein has remarked, none of the early forms of German conservatism could ever have envisaged revolution as being anything else than a deadly enemy.⁷ The alternative conservative strategies typical of the nineteenth century in general are on the one hand an attempt to repress all forms of opposition by reactionary methods including force and on the other the creation of reformist policies aimed at preserving the status quo. Revolution was invariably the main threat, the source of aggression and subversion, the destroyer of all traditional forms of life. Moreover, as Karl Mannheim has noted,⁸ the political consciousness of German conservatism in the late eighteenth century arose out of the urgent need to discredit the revolutionary attack on its credentials. Its alternative strategies, reaction or reform, only make sense as strategies of a doctrine already under attack. On the face of it Bismarck's policies in the Second Reich, substantially opposed to the reformist parliamentarianism of Disraeli in Britain, seemed to validate the policy of a reactionary and occasionally benevolent autocracy in a period of industrialisation and widescale social change.

The First World War however changed all that. It marked the watershed of modern German history. An autocratic regime had seemed to successfully endure the transition to a mass industrial age. But Germany's war-exhaustion and defeat put an end to such illusions. A regime, an era and a way of life had collapsed overnight. The apparent triumph of a traditional conservatism turned out to be a

terrible illusion. To the young nationalist generation who fought at the front the inability of a conservative and autocratic Germany to defend itself against the 1918 revolution was an unforgivable form of original sin. But once accomplished it was irreversible. In the writings of Oswald Spengler and Arthur Moeller van der Bruck who were the elder statesmen of the conservative revolution, there is expressed again and again the sentiment which fired the hearts of many young middle-class Germans. If conservatism had failed to defend itself against the revolutionary left and if the revolutionary left had failed to seize power in turn, then a new conservatism could emerge from the debacle which itself was revolutionary. If the fortress of traditional conservatism had collapsed simultaneously with the collapse of its deadliest attackers, the only alternative was for its former defenders to take on the mantle of destruction. The Freikorps, the quasi-legal volunteer army which defended the newly formed Republic against its leftish enemies, did so with a brutality and a contempt for legality which gave a new and more sinister meaning to Marx's caustic statement in the 18th Brumaire about the disrespect of counter-revolutionary armies for the sacrosanct bourgeois values which they are supposed to be defending. For many ex-front soldiers the Freikorps were an excuse for the renewal of irrational sacrifice and destruction. Under such conditions conservatism in its traditional sense seemed to have lost all meaning. By 1930 one young nationalist could write "to be conservative is to affirm necessity, destiny, life-and-death; to believe in circumstances is utopian-rationalist."⁹ The inability of a conservative and autocratic Germany to defend itself in 1918 was in the eyes of many young nationalists an unpardonable

Original sin. Once committed it was adjudged irreversible.

Revolution became for the German nationalists a weapon to be expropriated from the would-be ineffectual leftist and Marxist destroyers of conservative rule. For Hitler, the revolutionary Marxist tactics of bringing the masses out onto the streets, was something to be admired copied and finally bettered by national-socialism. For the fascist intellectuals on the other hand the main plagiarism from the Marxist left was the theoretical concept of revolution itself. In both cases fascism sought political revenge against the enemy whose methods it had adopted. But if orthodox conservatism was already a shattered remnant of a bygone era, what could their nationalism entail other than nostalgia and bitterness? The answer of the revolutionary-nationalists was that it entailed the perfection of statist rule to avenge the imperfections and humiliations of history. Here the idea of revolution was more than a mere concession to the climate of the modern age. It was a way of formulating the dynamic and ruthless process by which a new type of statist despotism relevant to the industrial societies of the twentieth century was to be inaugurated. In the writings of Juenger and his associates the worship of violence and revolution is both an exorcism of conservative vulnerability and a spur to revenge against those who have destroyed the autocratic order on which it was founded. The impetus to modernity is based on a deeply-felt resentment at the loss of tradition. It is to the historical basis of this tradition that we must now turn.

CHAPTER IPart 2

The key to the revolutionary nature of German nationalism in post-war Germany lies in the contradictory nature and historical development of Germany as a nation in the nineteenth century. Unlike France and Britain, Germany came into being as a nation-state only after Bismarck's wars of unification and the founding of the Second Reich in 1871. National sentiment had however preceded it by more than half a century. The war of liberation against France in 1813 marked the beginnings of the widespread call for the development of German national identity and unity. Even this however, had been preceded by an almost unique historical development in the history of European states - the fact was that Germany was preceded by one particular territorial area with its own administrative and statist traditions which went back for centuries; - the nucleus and the source of the creation of the German nation was Prussia. The stereotype of German nationalism as a monolithic and militaristic display of chauvinism which came to be adopted by the western democratic countries during the First World War was not as unproblematic as it seemed. The historical development of Germany was plagued by a double identity - the cultural and ethnic identity of a "Germanic people" and the historical fact of the particularistic and historically expanding state in the north-east of Germany - the state of Prussia.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the ideal of nationhood propounded by thinkers such as Herder, Novalis or Wilhelm von Humboldt was a cultural or spiritual one. They decreed that the nation should embody vital cultural or spiritual values necessary to the life of its people.¹ Their writings carried in them the flowering of cosmopolitan and humanistic ideals which had been nurtured in the generation of Goethe Schiller and Kant. But this universalism underlying such ideals of a national culture was overshadowed by the historical reality of Prussia. For many, Prussia alone possessed the statist attributes necessary for the creation of the new political territory of the nation. Prussia was the state within the nation which had existed before the nation itself. Its origins, traceable back to the colonisation of Old Prussia by the Teutonic Knights in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, presented a mine of mythical precedents for establishing it as the product of the ruthless and systematic application of a disciplined statecraft in medieval and modern Europe.² In the transition to the modern state in Europe, it had in the rule of Frederick the Great an example of the process of bureaucratic centralisation and benevolent despotism which, it was claimed, rivalled the growth of modernity in France and Britain. The main difference was that, unlike Britain, which made territorial acquisitions abroad, and France, which administered over a fairly fixed and stable territorial area, the process of the modernisation of the state in Prussia was complemented by the gradual territorial expansion of Prussia within Germany and Eastern Europe. The absorption of German principalities or Austrian provinces went hand in hand with the creation of a centralised bureaucracy, a standing army

and a general code of Prussian law.³ The setback to absolutism caused by the French Revolution and the humiliating defeat by Napoleon severely checked the advance of Prussia. But the retreat of Napoleon and the War of Liberation marked the beginnings of national sentiment which provided the historical foundations for the Second Reich, and the creation of an empire in which the tradition of Prussia was itself crucial. The emergence of Bismarck's Reich marked the new German state with the stamp of Prussianism. Despite its special position within the constitution of the Reich, Prussia lost a substantial amount of its previous political autonomy.

At the precise time when its practical political importance was somewhat diminished, its mythical importance increased. For many German nationalists it came to represent the true spirit of German nationalism. In doing so it substituted the nationalism of the people, the nationalism of popular sovereignty prevalent in Europe after the French Revolution, with the nationalism of the state. Teutonic colonisation, the growth of the landlord class - the Junkers, east of the Elbe with political and military responsibilities; the ruthless political leadership of Frederick the Great and Bismarck, were to be seen by the revolutionary-nationalists as the historically most enduring features of Prussianism. They were also regarded as the historical basis of Germany's strength in Europe. They were after all crucial moments in the history of Germany where Prussian rule had prevailed against the liberalising influence of German society. Unlike Louis XIV in France, the Prussian monarchs, especially Frederick William enlisted the Prussian nobility into the service of the state either as administrators or as members of the officer corps of the armies.

The Junkers became the ruling class of Prussia while on the other hand the autonomy of the Estates was destroyed.⁴ As a result no political counter-balancing force remained to the absolutist state either in the form of an estates-general as in France or in a parliament as in England. Later in the nineteenth century, when a revolutionary parliamentary assembly was formed during the 1848 revolution, it was not at Berlin in Prussia but in Frankfurt. The ability of the Prussian monarch Frederick William IV with the aid of the Junkers to withstand its liberal demands for the absorption of Prussia into a democratic Germany meant that the embryonic growth of a politically independent middle-class was stifled, at birth. The unification of Germany under Bismarck effectively emasculated German liberalism. Both the national-liberals and conservatives alike concurred in the process which was looked upon as a form of statist "revolutionary transformation". In return for Bismarck's great achievement, they were both prepared to accept the creation of a constitutional Rechtstaat, which while being designed to prevent both absolutism and popular rule, did little to strengthen the parliamentary power of the Reichstag to curb the power of Bismarck and his cabinet. The imperial Realpolitik of one man and the subsequent reliance of a whole generation of German politicians upon it, destroyed, according to Max Weber, the political capability and self-reliance of German politicians in either the conservative or middle-class parties.

The challenge of the middle-class to the state and its ruling-class supporters which had been the predominant feature of bourgeois revolutions in Britain and France never really materialised in Germany.

Moreover the contradictory dual nationalism of Germany and Prussia seemed to perpetuate a geopolitical division between state and society. During the period of industrialisation in the Second Reich when a new class of large-scale industrialists came into being, the norm of the political subordination of capitalism remained. Moreover, in contrast to the classic laissez-faire situation which characterized the development of industrial capitalism in England during its initial phases, the state in Germany itself became the largest single capitalist. Unlike England there was no middle-class radicalism which attached itself to a laissez-faire ideology aimed against the excessive power of the state on the one hand or a demand for direct political power on the other. The German state acted in economic collusion with industrialists as their political superior. According to Ralph Dahrendorf "Apart from giant banks and near monopolies in production, we soon find powerful economic combinations in forms of syndicates, trusts, cartels, all of which were not only tolerated but in fact furthered by the state in Germany".⁵ In Prussia, in particular this involved control of railroads, banks, coalmines and agricultural developments. Bismarck's welfare statist policies of regulating working hours, and creating pensions and insurance for workers while passing anti-socialist, anti-trade union legislation completed the process of paternalistic state intervention in industrial life. The ability of the state to minimise class-conflict in this period of rapid industrialisation by tying the hands of both the industrialists and the working-class led the young and exceedingly nationalistic Max Weber to conclude that the ruthless political leadership necessary to the struggles of an imperialistic Germany were not to be found in the

new social classes of an industrial society.⁶

While no tradition like Anglo-Saxon middle-class reformism and political independence was ever established, a radical working-class party was established in Germany before it was in Britain. The growth of the German social-democrats during the Second Reich, despite harassment from Bismarck, was remarkable not only in terms of recruitment but also in terms of centralised organisation and discipline. Under the leadership of Ferdinand Lassalle and later of August Bebel, the party became disciplined and relatively self-contained. Bismarck's policy of attempting to politically isolate the Social Democrats complemented the ideologically separatist mentality of their leaders and the doctrinaire Marxist ideology propounded by Karl Kautsky which was officially adopted by the party in its Erfurt programme of 1891. Its ideological extremism made it the subject of distrust and fear among conservative circles of the ruling-classes. It had no connections or even dialogue with potentially liberal sectors of the middle-class. In academic circles, in particular, entrenched opposition eventually produced the notorious "Lex Arons" forbidding membership to academics of the Social-Democratic party. Among its most notable victims was the political sociologist Robert Michels. But while the extreme ideological position of the Social-Democrats provided fruitful ammunition for ruling circles, its wholesale abstention from the types of widespread social agitation and unrest which were beginning to convulse the societies of Europe prior to 1914, meant that the exceptional domestic calm of Germany was maintained until the outbreak of war. The party remained, as Guenther Roth has suggested, radical in theory and moderate in practice.⁷ Any class-conflict in which it indulged was for the most part class-conflict from above, as it attempted to fend off the persecution of the

Second Reich.

The political subordination of the Reichstag and its middle-class parties and the political isolation of the social-democrats seemed to suggest that even with some form of parliamentarianism and political suffrage, albeit in Prussia a three-tier suffrage, the state as an autonomous and traditional instrument of politics could continue to dominate German society. But this meant not merely the domination of state over society, it meant the apparent domination of the state over German society as a whole. Its practical achievements meant that it did not need the extrinsic aid of conservative doctrine to legitimate its position. According to Weber, Bismarck's legacy was to destroy the power of conservative intellectuals to formulate political ideals. The legacy of sterility was reaped during the Wilhelmian era. German conservatism had ground to a halt and was bereft of ideals. "At no time in the last fifteen years," he wrote during the war, "has the Prussian conservative political character shown itself in the service of political ideals as Stahl or Gerlach or the old Christian-Socialists had in their own way".⁸ The main loss was the ideal of the nation as something independent of the machinations of the Prussian-centred Reich. Where an ideal of the nation did show itself, however, was outside conservative and ruling circles. It grew up in the Voelkisch ideal of an ethnically pure German race. The intellectual origins of Voelkisch racism, to be found in writers as diverse as Count Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Julius Langbehn and Heinrich Class, became an inspiration to a new generation of middle-class teachers and students, to members of the newly formed German Youth Movement, the Pan-German League and Georg Schonerer's pan-German movement centred in Vienna. Like Voelkisch thought, Prussianism benefited from the amorphous territoriality of German

nationhood. The historical absence of fixed and agreed borders for Germany meant that German nationality while being subordinated to Prussian statist claims on the other hand, could be subordinated to ethnic Germanic claims on the other. Both were amorphous and fluid. Neither presupposed fixed and agreed territorial claims, and neither identified nationality with popular sovereignty in the liberal-democratic sense.

The similar but often conflicting nature of the Prussian and voelkisch claims on German nationality provides the origin of the post-war distinction between revolutionary-nationalism and national-socialism. The Nazi idea of a racially pure German people was inherited from pre-war racist thinking and was a continuation at a lower intellectual level of anti-semitic and anti-urban sentiment. Several early core members of the party were members of the secret Thule Society in Munich which remained an incubator for voelkisch ideals during the traumatic period of socialist revolution and the Munich soviet republics.^{8b} In its notorious slogan of "Blood and Soil" Nazism combined rural and racial mysticism. The urban Jew was the stereotype of all the decadent features of urban life - effeminate cosmopolitan, unscrupulous financier and degenerate proletarian. The people as an indivisible unit were independent of the state but also independent of urban-industrial society. The voekisch and Nazi distrust of modernity was in distinct contrast to the conservatism of the revolutionary-nationalists. Nazism approved of the mass following of the people behind the slogan of Blut und Boden. It was modern in that it was populist but conservative in that it was anti-industrial. Prussianism on the other hand was elitist with regard to mass politics and hence conservative in the political

sense, but modern with regard to its acceptance of the centralisation of the modern state and the growth of industrialism. The elitist control of radical and centralist industrialisation eventually led Ernst Juenger and other revolutionary-nationalists to national-bolshevism, but under terms consistent with their worship of the mythical praxis of the Prussian state which retained their ideological allegiance.

Both voelkisch and Prussian nationalism sabotaged in their different ways the conservative nationalism of ruling circles and the academic mandarinat during the Second Reich. But it was the war itself which provided both the euphoria and the finale to the patriotic jingoism of the German upperclasses as it burst out into a dazzling series of utopian fantasies which the course of the war almost immediately destroyed. A general professorial silence on political issues of national importance was widespread up to the outbreak of the war. As late as 1913, in meetings held to celebrate the anniversary of the War of Liberation, many German professors gave warnings that the strident nationalism of the Pan-German League under the leadership of Heinrich Class was detrimental to authentic patriotism.⁹ The duty of the academic remained that of obeying the state rather than advocating the policy it should adopt. But the outbreak of the war itself transformed the conservative docility of the large majority of the Gelehrtenstand or professorial class into a new militant movement for annexationism. The aims of the Pan-German League became widespread in academic and intellectual circles of the political right. Flanked by the support of many leading German industrialists, pan-German influence reached its height in the academic community in the summer of 1915 with the so-called Petition of the Intellectuals signed by 1,347 notable people from the

intellectual professions. Of these 352 were academic professors. According to Heinrich Class the petition registered complete agreement with the aims of the Pan-German League for the annexation of Belgium and the border territories of Eastern France, the conquest of part of the northern French channel coast, land for the settlement of German farmers in eastern Europe, and the creation of a chain of German naval settlements around Europe to break the English naval monopoly and establish "the freedom of the seas".¹⁰

The supporters of annexationism were not merely pragmatic advocates of a ruthless expansionism. They saw themselves as fighting a war of ideals. "Every war is a war of beliefs" states Werner Sombart at the beginning of his polemical tract Traders and Heroes (Handler und Helden). The beliefs manufactured by the nationalist intellectuals to legitimate the war were known as "The Ideas of 1914" a phrase coined by Johann Plenge, a sociologist at Munster University. The war acted as a devastating trigger-mechanism to an outpouring of political utopianism which only a few years previously would not have seemed possible. For many the war provided a conclusive end to the professional and intellectual constraints of pure science and the standards of academic objectivity. Edouard Meyer, the historian wrote "It is no longer possible to think of scientific matters. We merely vegetate. All our previous activity has come to a standstill and the world in which we used to live has sunk into the distance behind us."¹¹ For others the war represented a coming triumph of German Kultur against Western civilisation. Reinhold Seeberg, a Berlin professor of history and one of the leading annexationists wrote "Above the stream of blood float the blissful thinkers dancing on air and singing the powerful melodies of world-historical progress, of Germany the great and strong."¹² Adolf Harnack urged his Berlin

students to prepare for a war of self-sacrifice in which individualism would have no meaning. Sombart, Max Scheler, Alois Riehl and Wilhelm Wundt took the opportunity to wage a war of polemics against the Anglo-Saxon intellectual tradition. While Riehl and Wundt attacked the shallowness of English ethics and epistemology since Locke, Scheler attacked the "cant" of British capitalist hypocrisy and bourgeois asceticism and Sombart fought a running battle against the legacy of Spencer, claiming that Germany was the prime historical example of a society which was both militant and industrial.¹³ One, in fact, in which English traders had been replaced by German heroes.

As propaganda, the "Ideas of 1914" were generally ineffective. Their appeal to the superiority of German Kultur could not compete with Allied propaganda about German militarism and the warlike mentality of the barbarous "Hun". They were more important historically speaking as a testament to the sense of religious crusade by which a previously docile group of conservative intellectuals had been stricken and to their illusions of military conquest as a vindication of superior cultural standing. The tragedy of pre-war Germany, which had experienced neither a successful bourgeois revolution nor the growth of an independent middle-class, was that the Prussian militaristic tradition had managed to co-exist with developments in German academic scholarship which were unparalleled anywhere else in Europe. Yet both the military officers corps and the professorial class were status enclaves loyal to ruling conservative circles and isolated from the middle-classes. Militarism and the pursuit of Kultur were both privileged though separate life-styles in the same society. After the outbreak of war, however, many conservative intellectuals thought in terms of a much closer and more positive union. German military

invincibility and the "ideas of 1914" were regarded as the twin spearheads of German expansionism. The prospect of an expansionist German empire called forth a multitude of euphoric and utopian schemes for social and political reorganisation. Some opposition to this expansionist frenzy came from left-wing intellectuals and the Social-Democrats, although the latter supported the war too on their own terms. But within professional and intellectual circles generally opposition was slight. Some of it came from the exclusive Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914 a small group of more moderate academics centred on Berlin, who included among their members the historians Ernst Troeltsch and Friedrich Meinecke. Although nationalistic in support of the war, they opposed the extremism of the pan-German annexationist claims. Yet hardly anywhere was there mounted a frontal attack on the whole ethos of "the ideas of 1914".

The major exception, in academic circles, was to be found in the wartime political writings of Max Weber, himself a member of the Deutsche Gesellschaft. Weber, in a very significant attack on the utopianism of the "ideas of 1914", presented an augury for the future emergence of revolutionary-nationalism. He was in fact almost alone in attacking the German war professors from the point of view which can be regarded as conservative and sociological. Klaus Schwabe has recently said that the war-ideas of the conservative intellectuals offered no rational or empirical grounds for the justification of the German war-effort.^{13b} They tended to see it as irrational and voluntaristic, and in many cases were prepared to accept the abandonment of the ideal of an international science and a cosmopolitan learning in their partisan commitment to the superiority of German culture. It was precisely this type of chauvinism and

conscious partisanship which Weber attacked in Science as a Vocation as denigrating the objective pursuit of knowledge. But his criticism was more far-reaching than this. He claimed that the superficial utopianism of the ideas of 1914 offered no defence against a universal process which was penetrating to the core of all modern industrial powers - the process of irreversible bureaucratisation.

"This sober fact of universal bureaucratisation (he wrote) in reality conceals itself behind the so-called "German ideas of 1914", behind what the literati euphemistically call the "socialism of the future", behind the slogans of organising "co-operative economy" and all other contemporary slogans of a similar nature. Even when they have the opposite intention they invariably promote the creation of bureaucracy." 14

The illusion of the German literati that the war was a liberating force which had let loose the possibility for a vast series of utopian aspirations for a future Germany was countered by Weber specifically through the assertion that highly rational organisational processes emerging without exception within all the industrial societies of the west would become the predominant features of those societies. Utopianism even though it intended the opposite could only become grist to the mill of universal bureaucracy. The intellectual illusion of importance was a last convulsion before an oncoming impotence of the spirit in general.

At its most extreme, Weber's argument exhibited an incurable fatalism at the prospect of the domination of man by the objects of his own scientific and technological creation in the machine age. The outcome of the war, he prophesied, would not be the world-historical triumph of German Kultur but the creation of an "iron cage

of bondage" reducing men to a state of servitude before their own organisational creations. In a famous passage in his essay "Parliament and government in a reconstructed Germany" he wrote

"A lifeless machine is a congealed spirit. Only this gives it the power to coerce men into its service and to dominate their everyday work as completely as in the factory.... But this congealed spirit is also that living machine represented by bureaucratic organisation with its specialisation of skills, its differentiated spheres of competence, its regulations and hierachical authority-relations. Together with the lifeless machine, it is at work erecting the iron cage of bondage to which one day men will perhaps be forced to submit like the fellahs of ancient Egypt. This might happen if a technically superior form of rational bureaucratic administration and welfare were to be the ultimate and exclusive value in the execution of its affairs....

An "organic" social stratification of an oriental Egyptian type would arise. But in contrast to the latter, it would be as ruthlessly rational as a machine."¹⁵

While his critique of professorial utopianism was conservative, his critique of his opponent's conservatism was sociological. Their futuristic designs had made no allowance for the fundamental processes of rationalisation in modern life. Their optimism was consequently dismissed as wishful thinking. Instead Weber entertained the possibility of universal servitude to a system

designed as a rational means of organising the productive life of man. Weber's pessimism foreshadowed the cultural despair that was to have its hour after Germany's defeat and humiliation. It was ominously prophetic not only of Germany's impending defeat in war but of the coming popularity of Germany's then unknown but subsequently notorious prophet of decline, Oswald Spengler. Before the war had ended Weber had announced what amounted to the death of the conservative nationalism which has grown up under Bismarck as a doctrine without ideals and ended up in the war as a wish-dream devoid of reality.

The subsequent question could only be "What direction can now be taken?" For Weber that direction was political democracy. He was interested in the possibility of genuine parliamentary conflict as a means of offsetting the growth of organisational bureaucracy and the 'Prussian' dominance of the civil service in the politics of the Second Reich. His emphasis on the importance of charisma however was due to the fact that he envisaged the ascendancy of politics over bureaucracy as taking place only through decisive and popular political leaders. Finally, attacking Nietzsche's aristocratic rejection of the democratic masses, he saw democracy as freeing the road for the development of genuine and cultured values within the social structure of bourgeois society.¹⁶ Yet this commitment to democracy, which at the end of his life forced Weber out of his Prussian mould towards something approaching the Anglo Saxon Tory democrat, lacked a certain element of personal conviction. For Weber, all roads, including socialism, at times appeared to lead to bureaucracy. Parliamentary democracy seemed like some form of

standing arrangement to deter the worst effects of servitude to the rational bureaucratic machine. Moreover there is a fundamental failure by Weber to accord to human values themselves the power of influencing the future. His severe and Prussian rejection of "an ethic of ultimate values" (Gesinnungsethik) in favour of "an ethic of responsibility" (Verantwortungsethik) echoes Nietzsche's devaluation of the Christian values of pity or altruism.¹⁷ But more than this it releases entirely the idea of progress in its affirmative evaluative sense from the process of rationalisation in the modern world. Unlike many conservatives Weber affirmed the application of reason to the modern world. But unlike many liberals he refused to see this as the progressive manifestation of values beneficial to humanity.

Weber's decision to fight for democracy was not therefore a commitment to fight for the idea of human progress. It was a commitment to fight for individual freedom of action in the face of overwhelming odds. One consequence of this was his controversial demand for a "leadership-democracy" in Weimar Germany in which a charismatic leader could emerge with presidential powers enabling him to control than be controlled by the bureaucratic machine. At the same time however he also hoped for a revitalised parliamentary politics in which all parties would actively fight genuine political conflicts unconstrained by civil service expertise or bureaucratic mediocrity. He in fact wanted the parliamentary parties of the future to assert their active will-to-power against the atrophying process of rationalisation. Charismatic leadership and parliamentary struggle were both heroic but constitutional expressions of the resistance to the

rationalisation that was everywhere the fate of modern man. It was a telling response to the disintegration of conservative nationalism. But for other nationalists who had equally turned their backs on the disasters of wartime nationalism it also had its point. While democracy and individual freedom were Western impositions which constituted an insult to Germany, the war-experience could be interpreted as Weber had suggested, namely as an accelerator in the growth of modern rationalisation. The war-experience of the front-generation from which the doctrine of revolutionary-nationalism emerged in fact came face to face with a certain aspect of this new and terrifying rationality. Weber's metaphor of the iron cage of bondage is a near-perfect transcription of the picture painted by Ernst Juenger of the modern soldier's enslavement to the requirements and destructive capacity of technological armaments in the stalemate of trench warfare. In a word, as we shall see, the battlefield is Juenger's iron cage. It was to give a totally different meaning to the suggestion by Weber that individual freedom of action was action within the iron cage. The iron cage of total war offered no opportunity for action that was individualistic, creative, or rational. It was collectivistic, irrational, and destructive. Instead of the lifelessness and the habitual routinization of modern bureaucracies however, it offered adventure, danger and sacrifice. While Weber had included the bureaucratisation of the modern mass army in his concept of rationalisation, he had omitted to say anything of the variation of psychological motives it produced. Juenger on the other hand was to produce an apologia for war which relied on the inevitability of its technological enslavement of the individual soldier. In the clichéd

language of the twentieth century war was hell, but a hell which had its own satanic attractions.

A rather different attack by Weber on the conservatism of the Second Reich was also crucially important to the development of revolutionary-nationalism. In pre-war Germany, the Junker landlords, the officer corps and the Prussian civil service were occupational status groups at the apex of German society, distinct and superior in social and cultural convention to the newly-emerging middle-classes but equally important objects of bourgeois aspiration. Weber claimed, however, that class differences did not necessarily involve a fundamental difference in life-styles. "Germany", he said, "is a nation of plebians". The Juenkers he regarded as plebian agricultural landowners engaged in routine managerial work. They lacked the cosmopolitan breeding of their anglo-saxon counterpart - the country gentleman. Unlike England, therefore, there was no aristocracy in Germany. The educational competition among bourgeois youth to gain positions in the civil service and the officer corps revealed not the breeding of an aristocracy but the "physiognomy of the parvenu".¹⁸ Student duelling fraternities in German universities were seen by Weber as too chauvinistic to be a breeding-ground for aristocrats. Although Germany was Prussian, authoritarian and hierachical in its social stratification, it was not an aristocratic society. Looking forward to the future, therefore, Weber claimed that nothing of aristocratic value would be lost. "If democratisation has the effect of eliminating the social prestige of the academically qualified man.... then no politically valuable forms of social life would be abolished here".¹⁹ This, in retrospect, offered the revolutionary-nationalists

the comforting rationalisation that the destruction of the Second Reich and the creation of a republican democracy had not destroyed anything of intrinsic value to Prussianism, but merely represented the disintegration of a Staendestaat which had been unable to hold in check the emergence of a parvenu bourgeois society and consequently perished through its own effeteness.²⁰ In this context Germany could be seen in retrospect as a capitalist nation-state not possessing a true aristocracy, not embodying any fundamentally different cultural values to those of the west, and not containing, despite the heroic and solitary Realpolitik of Bismarck, any statist solution to the inexorable growth of bourgeois society. The apparent domination of the German state over bourgeois society which claimed the loyalty and quiescence of the conservative nationalists was now revealed as an illusion. Germany in the Second Reich, according to Ernst Juenger, was an "age of pseudo-rule" in which authentic Prussian forms of domination had already ceased to function. The trappings of militarism, culture and hierachy were now merely factors fatally retarding the development of Germany into a bourgeois nation capable of holding its own with the west. The destruction of conservative nationalism was therefore no great loss, because it was not part of an authentic Prussianism.

Prussianism came therefore to signify much more of a life-style and a myth to be viewed independently of historical circumstances. It was the yardstick of a conservative allegiance which Juenger maintained even when reality seemed to desert it. In a letter to his brother just after the war Juenger wrote:

"Perhaps I have done what the Prussians expected of me, and I sometimes ask myself if they too have done what I expected of them. In spite of that, what has survived of Prussianism is still more dear to me than what the idealists offer us."²¹

The revolutionaries are "emaciated rats" with "overrefined doctrines" who revolt and nauseate him. He clings instead to the lifeline of a promise which has all but passed into history. Juenger's continuing loyalty to Prussianism after the destruction of the Second Reich, was the loyalty to a myth extrapolated from a network of complex historical circumstances. To many younger nationalists who felt the attraction of this myth, the publication of Oswald Spengler's Prussianism and Socialism was to give them unquestionable support. For it attempted to take out of the hands of the 1918 revolutionaries the emotive concept of socialism central to their whole existence. Juenger meanwhile had seen in the myth of Prussianism as the core of German national identity the enduring antidote to the idealism which he despised. He was also able to give its most important circumstantial evidence - the front-experience which constituted his own iron cage of bondage and gave him a metaphysical contentment in the midst of dangerous servitude. While Prussianism provided the legacy of continuity in German nationalism, its conservative legality, its privileged social hierarchies and its 'compromise' with political democracy and bourgeois society all came to be viewed with contempt. In place of the pseudo-aristocracy of the Second Reich, Juenger envisaged a new Nietzschean master-aristocracy, a ruling race freed from the legal and cultural constraints of the age of pseudo-rule. Beside Bismarck he placed Nietzsche the distraught

philosopher of the Uebermensch who had called Bismarck a "fraternity student" and the state "the cold monster". Revolutionary-nationalism became characterised by both Prussian and Nietzschean tendencies and attempted to resolve the tension that Nietzsche himself found between the spiritless order of the Machtstaat and his own destructive intellect. But had not Nietzsche himself written in The Twilight of the Idols

"'Deutschland Deutschland, ueber alles: I'm afraid that was the end of German philosophy.... Are there German philosophers, Are there German poets? Are there good German books? These are the questions foreigners ask me. I blush but with the boldness characteristic of me in desperate straits, I reply "Yes, Bismarck!"

With the aid of Bismarck, Nietzsche produced his obituary of the German spirit. His own philosophy was to remain the essential clue to its afterlife. Revolutionary-nationalism was the hybrid of an intellectual current nurtured in the works of the great philosopher which ceased to concern itself with Geist and devoted its obsessions to Macht. German idealism dissolved before the new fetishisms of violence and power. The will-to-power triumphed among Nietzsche's philistine disciples thriving under the illusion that they were made demonic by war. That same illusion was the prelude to the destruction of German culture itself.

NOTESCHAPTER I - Part 1

1. Notably in the work of Arwin Mohler, private secretary to Ernst Juenger after the Second World War. See his Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1914-1933; also the highly selective apolitical portrait of Junger in Auf die Schleife; Dokumente zum Weg Ernst Juenger. For English language studies, there is the ex-Nazi Hermann Rauschnung Make or Break with the Nazis: Notes on a conservative revolution and the academic and ultra-conservative Germany's new Conservatism by Klemens von Klemperer.
2. Notably the study of a former revolutionary-nationalist Karl O. Paetel National-Bolschevismus; Versuchung oder Chance
3. Linke Leute von Rechts Stuttgart 1961
4. On the diversity of the different types of European fascism see the symposium edited by H. Woolf European Fascism. For a major comparative study of fascism in France, Italy and Germany, (which nonetheless omits German revolutionary-nationalism) see Ernst Nolte Three Faces of Fascism
5. See the classic study of Hannah Arendt The Origins of Totalitarianism Part 3
6. The Ideology of Fascism New York 1969. Introduction esp. p.10ff.
7. The Origins of German Conservatism Princeton 1966 p14ff.
8. "Conservative Thought" in Essays on Sociology and Social Psychology London 1953 p84ff.
9. Werner Best "Das Krieg und der Recht" in Ernst Juenger ed. Krieg und Krieger Berlin 1930 p.139.

NOTESCHAPTER I - Part 2

1. For a classic discussion of the development of cosmopolitanism in the German idea of the nation-state see Frederick Meinecke Weltbuergertum und Nationalstaat Munich 1963 (Trans. Cosmopolitanism and the National State Princeton 1970).
2. The medieval mythology of Prussianism is developed by the nationalist historian Heinrich von Treitschke Deutsche Geschichte in 19. Jahrhundert 5 vols. Leipzig 1879 and The origins of Prussianism (Das deutsche Ordensland Preussen trans. by E & C. Paul London 1942).
3. See E & J. Feuchtwanger Prussia; myth and reality chap.3 London 1971.
4. F. L. Carsten The Origins of Prussia London 1954 p.168
5. Society and Democracy in Germany London 1966 p.37
6. In his inaugural Freiberg address of 1896 "Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftspolitik" in Gesammelte Politische Schriften pl7ff. (Tuebingen 1958 2nd ed.)
7. The Social Democrats in Imperial Germany p.163ff
8. Weber op.cit. p.301.
- 8b. On the continuity between pre-war Voelkisch thought and the nascent ideology of the Nazi party in Munich after the war see Martin Broszat Der Nationalsozialismus p.21ff and Gilbert Phelps "Before Hitler Came", Thule Society and Germanen Orden" Journal of Modern History 35, 1963 p.245ff.
9. Klaus Schwabe "Ursprung und Verbreitung des Alldeutschen Annexationism in der Deutschen Professorenschaft in Ernst Weltkrieg". Vierteljahreshefte fuer Zeitgeschichte Vol.10 1966 p.496f.

10. Heinrich Class Wider den Strom Leipzig 1932 p.395f; see also Hans W. Gatzke Germany's Drive to the West Baltimore 1950 p.117ff.
11. Cited in Klaus Schwabe "Die Deutschen Professoren und die Politischen Grundfragen des Ersten Weltkrieges". Diss Freiberg 1958 p.63.
12. Reinhold Seeberg Krieg und Seele Berlin 1916 p.154.
13. Sombart Handler und Helden p.65ff
14. Weber op.cit. p.318 (Trans. in G.Roth ed. Economy and Society vol 3, Appendix ii "Parliament and Government in a reconstructed Germany")
15. *ibid.* p.320-321.
16. "Wahlrecht und Demokratie in Deutschland" *ibid.* p.272.
17. See the perceptive, but overstated comparison of Nietzsche and Weber by Eugene Fleischmann "De Nietzsche à Weber" in European Journal of Sociology 5, 1964, no.2, p.210f; also Wolfgang Mommsen "Max Weber's Political Sociology and his Philosophy of World History" in D. Wrong (ed) Max Weber New Jersey 1970 p.183ff.
18. Weber op.cit p.265-266
19. *ibid.* p.273
20. See Ernst Juenger Der Arbeiter chapter 1; Hugo Fischer Nietzsche Apostata p.65ff. See below Chapter II. For Carl Schmitt's Analysis of Weber's contribution to the theory of the modern state, which is, however, not altogether relevant here, see his Verfassungslehre Munich 1928, pp.286f, 335f.
21. 3rd December 1921 in Die Schleife; Dokumente zum Weg von Ernst Juenger (ed. Arwin Mohler) Zurich 1955 p.76.

CHAPTER IIIN THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE.

The Great War resulted in the decimation of a whole generation of German youth. The German army left behind it on the battlefield more than two million dead. Among those who suffered at the hands of the immense slaughter were those same sections of middle-class German youth whose enthusiasm for the Fatherland was so great on the outbreak of war. At Langemarck thousands of young Germans singing "Deutschland ueber alles" and various Wandervoegel songs were massacred as they advanced into battle. The type of warfare, the number of casualties, the importance of machinery were things of which few people in 1914 had dreamed. How did German youth react to its immersion in mass slaughter? Any answer to such a question would inevitably be an inadequate paraphrase. Yet there is strong evidence to be found that the credibility of the war as a war of patriotic ideals was drastically undermined.

This is especially the case if one considers the correspondence of young German students who were later to be killed in the war.¹ Most of them invariably contrasted their initial euphoria with their first experience of the realities of war. For many of them there is an obvious sense of desperation in their attempts to convince their parents and their families in Germany that the war is something which neither they nor, for that matter, history had ever before experienced. Many letters plaintively begin with words like the following: "You at home can't have the faintest idea what it means to us when it simply

says in the newspaper in a bland tone 'In Flanders today only artillery activity'"² or, again, from another student "You can form absolutely no idea of our incredible privations."³ Yet another, a medical student, trying to convey the slaughter which confronts him in his first battle, writes "It is impossible to describe it, and even now when it is a day behind us, I myself can hardly believe that such bestial barbarity and unspeakable suffering are possible. Every foot of ground contested, every hundred yards another trench; everywhere bodies - rows of them!"⁴ Others saw the heroism which they believe was offered them as nothing more than hideous brutality.⁵ Others, more articulate, realised the cheapness of death in the face of technological war.⁶

Although some letters contain eulogies of landscape or expressions of devotion to the Fatherland, by and large, there emerges as the dates of the letter-headings go on, a cumulative sense of disenchantment. The people back home, the collective sentiment seems to say, don't know what things are like and don't do what we have to do. The inescapable fact of the soldier's uniqueness, his solitude begins to emerge. Some hold to the thin thread of patriotism and the idea of sacrificing themselves to their country's future greatness, but uncertainty about the course of the war overshadows their conviction. Others write that their life as soldiers has involved a fundamental transformation of their experience. A Marburg theology student writes "we are alienated from all the people and things connected with our former life".⁷ In his next letter he tries to convey the basis of this sense of alienation and of the distance which has grown up between his former identity and his soldier's self-image; he tries to convey the effect that the routinization of violence has upon him:

"The 3rd and 4th companies were wiped out - one patrol only fought its way through. They were surrounded and attempts on the part of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions to rescue them failed, the third being blown up, while the fourth.... held out for six days.... until they fixed their last cartridge.

"One of the platoon commanders was killed.... and his elder brother wounded. My Fahrlich comrade H.H. is said by an eye-witness to have been killed. Only three regular officers of the old regiment are left.

"These are bald statements of events, but what terrible memories do they not hold for the human soul! All the books in the world could not contain them. It is enough to haunt a man for the rest of his life to have seen one murder; the soldier is doomed to appear hard, insensitive and brutal. And during an attack? you ask. 'Then a man is no longer a man', as once said a Jaeger officer who had been in the Argonne since September and taken part in storm after storm, including the last. Each of these experiences stands alone, incomprehensible, inexplicable, irrational.

"Many a fine poem, enthusiastically composed in a snug sitting-room, about the hero's end and the glory of such a death will now be read with a bitter smile." 8

The extract is revealing in two ways. Firstly, it poses the question of the effect experiencing and being part of mass slaughter has upon the ordinary soldier, and secondly, it gropes its way, through the irony at the end, to an implicit assertion that the experience of storm-fighting cuts off the combat soldier from all those around him, even those who want to sympathise with him or eulogize his name in poetry. It presents the storm-fighter as different, unique, beset by irrational and inhuman instincts. The crucial phrase "Then a man is no longer a man" refers to the transformation of identity which the personality undergoes under the stress of heavy combat and the first-hand experience of mass violence. It attempts to articulate the idea that the soldier had become a law unto himself.

The extract contains in embryonic form many of the sentiments that pervaded the war-writings of what was to be called the 'new

nationalism". Bearing this in mind, it is significant that in the type of correspondence analysed above, the disenchantment with idealistic patriotism did not seem to lead many students to actually go on and condemn the very idea of war. One finds little evidence of pacifist sentiment. Towards the end of the war, however, there was a very strong challenge from within German intellectual circles to the idea expressed in the words of Wilfred Owen's ironic poem "Dulce et decorum est, pro patria mori". There grew up as the slaughter and the stalemate of the war on the Western Front increased, a universal condemnation of war itself. It came less from within the echelons of those who had fought in the war than from bohemian and intellectual circles within Germany itself. In particular, they were grouped around the Expressionist movement which had emerged as a formidable cultural force in the pre-war years. In many expressionist manifestoes and dramas war was condemned as an instrument for the destruction of the brotherhood of mankind. Pacifist circles formed in particular around Rene Schickele's magazine, Die Weissen Blatter and also around Die Aktion, an influential periodical produced by the Activists of Kurt Hiller.⁹ Among those few Expressionists whose disillusionment with war came from their actual participation in it were Ernst Toller, the famous dramatist, and Fritz von Unruh, an ex-Prussian officer. Unruh in his book, The Way of Sacrifice,¹⁰ condemns the bloodshed of the 1916 Verdun offensive in unequivocal terms and finds the only value to be had within the battlefield the actual sense of community which existed between soldiers similarly situated in the face of adversity. His former patriotism had dissolved in disillusionment. The political

consequences of pacifism were to be felt at the end of the war in the Expressionists' support for the November revolution of 1918. The revolution was interpreted in many Expressionist writings as the apocalyptic event designed to end all wars. The link between pacifism and socialism was seen on a much wider scale in the support the revolutionaries, and especially the Spartacists, gained from war-weary soldiers and sailors who had either mutinied or returned from the front. The disenchantment of many people, both workers and intellectuals, helped to bring about the collapse of the political system responsible for the war.

With only a few exceptions, however, and Unruh was perhaps the outstanding one, there is little evidence that young middle-class Germans who had attained some sort of officer status in the war, turned pacifist or supported the November revolution. Of the many who died on the battlefield, a question-mark must be suspended over them. The overwhelming majority of the junior officer class in the German army which took sides in the post-war events joined up with the Freikorps, volunteer counter-revolutionary units who banded together to destroy the revolutionary forces in a systematically destructive manner. It is within the junior officer class that one finds the seeds of the new nationalism - an equal hatred of idealistic patriotism and socialist pacifism. As an alternative to both patriotism and pacifism, there is substituted in 'new nationalism' a 'soldierly' (soldatisch) ethos of destructive violence. To understand the origins of the sentiments underlying this ethos, the development of the war, especially on the Western Front, becomes very important.

By 1916 the stalemate of trench warfare was beginning to make significant demands upon the German Army which were to affect both the morale and the organisation of its troops. The transition from mobile to static warfare created an extraordinary bureaucratisation of military structure. Rosinski states:

"As the necessity for quick decisions decreased and the amount of administrative work increased in trench warfare, the commander's function decreased, and that of his staff officers increased. This led to the hypertrophy of the general staff system which already enjoyed a position of extraordinary prestige and threatened to reduce the corps commanders to mere figureheads."¹¹

In general, the reliance on front-line troops to such a vast extent exposed them to extraordinary dangers and tasks. In comparison with the Allies the German shock troops were numerically inferior, and given much less support and relief by inferior artillery. In addition, many artillery experts claimed that, owing to the lack of explosives in German shells, they had a far less effective material and psychological effect than did those of the Allies on the German front line.¹²

On the Western Front storm-troops were devised as elite formations of mobile troops to storm the enemy lines and make breakthroughs for the regular infantry. Their initial effectiveness at the Somme inspired the creation of them throughout the German army.¹³ One of the most outstanding commanders of one of these storm units was a young officer from a Hanoverian regiment named Ernst Juenger. Before the war, Juenger, the son of a chemist, had run away from school and tried to enlist in the French Foreign Legion, and he and his brother had been ardent members of the Wandervogel. The war gave Juenger the opportunity to find the adventure which civilian life lacked. His quick promotion to lieutenant was typical of the recruitment of vast numbers of middle-class students, many of them

no more than school leaving age, into the junior officer stratum of the army. The elite Prussian officer corps, unprepared for mass technological war in 1914, had been virtually decimated in the first few months of the campaign, when most of its officers took unnecessary risk and showed unnecessary bravery. With the development of the war vast replacements and extensions of the officer class was necessitated.¹⁴ Since promotion from the non-commissioned ranks was strictly limited, vast numbers of the replenishment force were middle-class student volunteers. The heritage of 'new nationalism' and the leaders of the post-war Freikorps were both in large part derived from that section of junior officers in command of storm battalions.

Juenger was a typical commander of this group. He saw quite clearly the importance of the storm battalions. "Above all", he writes, "I devoted my efforts to the training of a shock troop, as it had become more and more clear to me that in the course of the war all success springs from individual action, while the mass of the troops give impetus and weight of fire."¹⁵ He envisaged the storm troops as the new elite of the German army. He called them 'the princes of the trenches'. He was not typical of the military stratum to which he belonged, however, in that he wrote in the aftermath of the war, the most remarkable account of the type of warfare in which he was engaged that has perhaps ever been made. Throughout the early twenties, first as an officer in the Reichswehr and then as a zoology student at Leipzig University, he wrote a series of remarkable war-memoirs - Storm of Steel in 1921, Conflict as an Inner Experience in 1922, Wood 125 in 1925 and Fire and Blood in 1926.¹⁶ His description

of war ranges from the extremely subjective to the extremely objective. At one moment he brings forth the emotions of the soldier advancing into battle, the next he gives a poetic and panoramic description of a battlefield which encompasses whole armies. A crystalline analysis of the process of war is linked with the total recall of his own feelings as he fought in it.

More important than this, from a sociological point of view, is that Juenger was perhaps the first writer to give a detailed subjective account of the process of socialisation in war. It is a graphic portrayal of the total environment of war.¹⁷ The rising awareness which we noted above in the Marburg theology student of the alienation-effect that war has upon permanent combat-soldiers, becomes in Juenger a thorough and worked-out description of the process of alternation.¹⁸ He catalogues the transformations that occur both in the personality and the self-image of the front-fighter of the storm battalions. It is a description of a total change of identity and a revelation of man's basic instinct for destruction. "When war tears the European community apart", he writes, "when we confront each other from behind banners and symbols at which many had laughed so sceptically, (destruction) reveals itself as a primeval judgement. The true man identifies himself in the smoke-filled orgy of war which for so long had been neglected by all."¹⁹

The image of the 'rage for blood' as the revelation of man's basic instincts runs throughout all Juenger's writings. In the moment of advance "The turmoil of our feelings was called forth by rage, alcohol and the thirst for blood.... The tremendous force of destruction that bent over the field of battle was concentrated in our brains. So may the men of the Renaissance have been locked in their passions, and so may a Cellini have raged or werewolves

hunted through the night on the track of blood".²⁰ Or, again, he says ecstatically, "The overpowering desire to kill gave me wings. Rage squeezed bitter tears from my eyes".²¹

After the complacency of civilised bourgeois society, the war has revealed man to be a truly destructive being. The front-fighter, the permanent destroyer, is a man who has 'switched worlds'. He is "saturated in experience and blood". But this, Juenger says, was not the reason his own generation went to war. Their initial enthusiasm was engendered by a wave of idealism inconsonant with the realities of war. Both this disenchantment and revelation of destructive instinct are incorporated in his statement "I have not become old, but I have become someone else."²² If the experience of war reveals man subjectively as he is, it also reveals to him objectively society as it is. There is a dialectic in the movement of Juenger's writings between Juenger's description of the alternation process and his description of the total environment and finally back towards the environment-modified man. The environment of war is a massified and objectivated reality confronting the front-fighter. It is the revelatory shock of matériel (Das Material). For the first war in human history the fate of individual men was decided by the machinery of armaments. The soldier's environment, the battlefield that stretches for miles around him, is the environment of technological weaponry, and the technology of war is the outcome of the increased intensity and competitiveness of industrial production in civil society. The First World War for Juenger is the inevitable heritage of industrial society and on the battlefield the reliance on technological weaponry symbolizes the conquest of man by man-made machines.

"The domination of machine over man, of the servant over the master, is obvious and a more profound change which was already beginning to violently shake the roots of the social and economic order in peacetime, has now crystallized into human butchery" 23

For Juenger, therefore, war is not a setting in which man struggles against man, but one in which man more fundamentally struggles against his environment. Rage and brutality, the primordial emotions, are autonomous instincts, independent of any personal enmity. One fights the enemy because they are on the other side of the front line, and they too in fighting back are struggling against the technological pervasiveness of the environment. For man to retain his hatred and his courage - his will to fight - is not to defy the enemy, but to defy 'materiel'. The mass-machine slaughter of the war reveals the machine as the enemy of man and also a more primordial distinction between man and matter.²⁴ German youth, bereft of all its enthusiasm, vows not to fall as victims to the machine. "Hardened by experience they remain sober in a pitiless world".²⁵ There is a lengthy passage in Storm of Steel where Juenger captures the essence of the front-fighters' confrontation of the massified and objectivated reality of technology. It shows not only the sense of helplessness at being projected into a pre-existent world which is external to him and independent of his own action. It also tries to show how he must 'reclaim' that world by responding to it and imposing himself upon it.²⁶ Not only is he socialised into an objectivated reality which he then internalises, but the process of internalisation is a dialectic movement back towards the environment of which he is a product and upon which he in turn must impose himself, by dramatic action. Juenger's description is of a battle-ravaged landscape at Guillemont:-

"In this neighbourhood of villages, woods and fields there was literally not a bush or a blade of grass to be seen. Every hands-breadth of grass had been churned up again and again; trees had been uprooted and smashed and ground to touchwood, the houses blown to bits and turned to dust; hills had been levelled and the arable land made into a desert.

"And yet the strangest thing of all was not the landscape in itself, but the fact that scenes such as these, which the world had never known before, were fashioned by men who intended them to be a decisive end to the war. Thus all the frightfulness that man could devise was brought onto the battlefield; and where there had been an idyllic picture of rural peace, there was now a faithful picture of the soul of scientific war. In earlier wars, certainly, towns and villages had been burned, but what was this compared with this sea of craters dug out by machines? For even in this fantastic desert there was the sameness of the machine-made article. A shell-hole strewn with bully tins, broken weapons, fragments of uniforms and dud shells with one or two bodies on its edge....this was the never-changing scene that surrounded each one of those thousands of men. And it seemed that man, on the landscape he himself created, became more different, more callous, more hardy and more mysterious than in any previous battle. After that battle the German soldier first wore the steel helmet and his features were chiselled with the lines of an energy stretched to its utmost pitch, lines that future generations will find as fascinating and imposing as the heads of Renaissance times." 27

On the landscape of destructive technology, the soldier becomes "more different, more callous, more hardy and more mysterious" in order to merge with the setting around him. He carves his image out of the circumstances into which he has been propelled and the image - the steel helmet and the chiselled features remain indelibly printed upon his personality. At last he has made himself the equal of the destructiveness of technological war. The process of alternation is complete. Out of purgatory of front-line fighting a 'new type' has been born - the front-fighter, the warrior. Unlike the German academic professors waging war with their pens, the warrior does not fight ideological wars in the name of culture against civilisation. He does

not acknowledge national stereotypes. Juenger says at one point he bears no personal animosity towards the British soldier. He even finds it possible to admire his courage. For what truly counts is nothing more than the actual qualities of fighting itself. "The essential thing is not why we fight", Juenger writes at one point, "but how we fight."²⁸ Yet Juenger realises that there is a purpose which can be deduced in the fighting of the front-fighter. By fighting the enemy he is also fighting technology, the legacy of the previous generation. In Fire and Blood in which he develops his attack on technology much further than in his earlier war-books, he claims that the warrior is engaged in a generational struggle against the Wilhelminian generation who developed 'materiél', that is to say, all the destructive technological capacities of the war. He does not regard the pre-war generation in terms of conservative nationalism, which he was later to regard as an ideological artifice,²⁹ but in terms of the politicians and industrialists who pushed forward economic development much to their own liking and independently of the opinions of the academic class.

This generational struggle is the struggle against the conditioning environment. The warrior defies technology by making human combat significant. The storm-troop elite, so crucial to strategic advances, defies the technological leviathan. In doing so it attacks the heritage of its former generation. When Juenger spoke of "man on the landscape which he himself had created", he meant the landscape made possible by the materialism of the previous generation. Juenger's dialectic fulfills itself when man transformed

by the landscape made possible by the previous generation, himself launches out as a transformer of landscapes, of other settings distant from the warrior's world. Socialized into a reality beyond his control, he emerges as a product of that reality, poised to ensure that other realities will be controlled by him. The method of his control is the destructive powers that war has taught him. The Juenger this dialectic process of objectivation, internalisation and externalization is condensed into a poetic image of the nature of war:

"War, the father of all things, is also our father; it has hammered, chiselled and hardened us into what we are. And as long as the wheel of life circles around us, the war will be the axis round which it revolves. It has pulled us into the fight and fighters we will remain as long as we live.... but not only is war our father, it is also our son.... we have been hammered and chiselled but we are also men who swing hammers and wield chisels, blacksmiths of sparkling steel, martyrs of our deeds, made forceful by force."³⁰

The warrior internalizes the reality of war and becomes the embodiment of it. With the deeds of the Freikorps already before him as he was writing, Juenger envisaged the elite storm troops of the Western Front continuing after the war's end to scourge and destroy the cities of mid-Europe.³¹ Their activities in the future were not to be contained by official declarations of war. In Wood 125 he has an embryonic vision of a German empire of a hundred million to be fought for by the storm elites without considerations of space or time, and whose eventual emergence would justify all the death and destruction necessary to its creation.³² For the most part the vision remains unpolitical. The destructive warrior is law unto himself. He is the last hope against the massified technological reality handed down by past generations.

At a crucial point in his writing, however, Juenger deflects his portrait of the emergent warrior from the struggle against environment to suggest in fact that the very environment which oppresses him is necessary to his self-fulfillment. This occurs in his elaboration of the concept of 'adventure'. About Juenger's warrior there is a fundamental stoicism. Oppressed by the hurricane of destruction unleashed by 'material' he does not seek to evade it, nor to reconstitute the world as a world without hurricanes, but rather he advocates a form of ultimate self-fulfillment in the eye of the hurricane itself. Though he fights against technology, the warrior cannot do more in purely objective military terms than to defy, to seek not to let it diminish human bravery. He cannot destroy it. It will always be there, even if there are modifications in its nature. Hence, he must ultimately seek fulfillment in the midst of the very world which enslaves him, knowing that while its boundaries alter in shape and size, its boundaries will always remain. The enslavement of duty, the oppressiveness of military tasks are, according to Juenger, the necessary sign-posts on the road to the magic quality he calls 'adventure'. He writes:

"Every age has its tasks, its duties and its pleasures, and it also has its adventurers. And every age has a younger generation, which has its hour and loves adventure, in which the play of children assumes significance on account of its adult seriousness. Therein lies the real meaning of life....

"Certainly it (war) is serious. But the adventure is the whole which lies over and above danger. The task is life but the adventure is poetry. Duty makes work difficult but the desire for danger makes it easy. Hence, we are never ashamed of being adventurers."³³

Nothing is further from adventure than the rationality of the goal-directed act. It is enough that war should exist, that there will always be battles to be fought and battles to be won. The permanence of the enslaving environment which man seeks to defy,

ensures the permanence of the defiance which leads to the magic of adventure. The warrior's destructiveness becomes meaningful only in the sense that "the play of children assumes significance on account of its adult seriousness." It is enough to know that it makes an impact without knowing why. Justified neither in terms of its reasons or its consequences, the adventure of war is justified in terms of the magic of its eschatological immediacy. The lot of the soldier, according to Juenger, is never to reason why - as long as he reasons why.

Juenger's ethic is an ethic of anarchistic nihilism. The purpose of the soldier is to destroy - and destroy and destroy. In the midst of the inferno, the significance of human action boils itself down to sheer physical impact. Although the nihilism of adventure is anarchistic, it is not according to Juenger, individualistic. The warrior, the storm-fighter, is a collective type. The column of soldiers marching into battle is "One will - one movement".³⁴ It is above all because the storm-troops have been fused "into a hermetic unity" that they are able to seek out danger. Their capacity for adventure is reflected in the sheer volume of their undifferentiated number. They experience adventure as a collective mass. The suicidal advance into combat shows the interplay between the mundane uniformity of the setting and the excitement at the prospect of collective destruction:

"Everything is monochrome, uniform and grey. Everything is utilitarian and purposeful, like the process of a machine in motion. But everything is exciting, like the sight of the machine is for those who have lived life at its fullest and most violent. Here in our truest guise we draw closer to the slaughter to imprint our new and binding seal into the flowing wax of the world.

"We wheel round to be annihilated in the most profoundest of senses and the greatest of unities."³⁵

The warrior as a collective type satisfies his desire for adventure in the act of destruction bordering on suicide. In the elusive moment of victory, he feels himself to be part of a world-historical power. "There", writes Juenger, "history is experienced at its burning-point."³⁶

The process of alternation has thus come full circle. The warrior forged out of the total environment of war, must remain perpetually enslaved by that which he permanently defies. The setting of war alters, but wherever he fights the environment of 'material' will follow him. The distinction between war and peace, Juenger prophesied, would ultimately vanish, but the warrior would remain, indestructible amidst destruction - in permanent opposition to the permanent environment of permanent war. Above all, exultant that the source of his oppression is without end, he extracts the poetry of adventure out of the eye of the hurricane.

II

A significant variation on the theme of alternation in the war-writings of the new nationalists is provided by another storm-fighter who had experience of both the Russian and the Western Fronts - Franz Schauwecker. Like Juenger, Schauwecker had written his first book of war-memoirs, In the Jaws of Death, very soon after the end of the war. Towards the end of the twenties, with the great influx of war-literature which was prompted by the outcry following the publication of Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front, he wrote two novels,³⁷ both of them more impressive than his first work and also with the unmistakable imprint of Juenger's example upon them.

The first of these was called The Fiery Way, and in it Schauwecker documents the transition experienced by a student into a fully-fledged front-line officer. Much less complex than Juenger, and with less of an intricate concern for sociological analysis, nonetheless there are important thematic similarities. Unlike Juenger, Schauwecker traces the course of his semi-autobiographical hero from school into the army and finally to the front. Essentially, however, he is concerned with the same process of transformation - of the entry into a unique and radically new world.

The central figure of the piece is a student volunteer. He enlists in that glow of euphoria and patriotism that swept the younger middle-class generation of Germany in 1914. But his illusions are soon dispelled when he has his first encounter with military training. "Drill has begun", he writes, "and the free life of the individual is swept aside."³⁸ Training for war is for Schauwecker an electrifying process. Beneath the artificial pomp and glory of military ceremony, discipline makes the individual dissolve into the collective mass under the hand of an iron discipline. The experience of coercion is eulogised in poetic images of events, recalled in tremendous detail and intensity:

"The army tosses us, pounds us, kneads us, with fists like the fists of blacksmiths. It thrusts at us cold, stern, horribly inexorable, and we face it stiffly, head high, chin firm on chinstrap, neck up, arms to the side, stomach in, chest out, knees straight, shoulders back, mouth shut, eyes to the front, and face immovable as iron."³⁹

The experience of relentless discipline is an electrifying transformation for the typical student of the gymnasium or the

university. It replaces academic discipline with a discipline which is at once more horrifying, more challenging, and more necessary to man's survival. In comparison, the intellectual pursuits of the student are "grotesque, pedantic and appallingly empty." The so-called scholar vegetates in the no-man's land of sterile theory and loses all trace of his real existence. In the lecture hall, Schauwecker writes, "dust flew out of the books and covered the earth. The lecturer's desks creaked with dryness. Examination was a monster with a sackful of dried facts on its back."⁴⁰ The outbreak of war is a form of liberation, as the students of 1914 thought it was. But with historical hindsight, Schauwecker attempts to cast this liberation in a more specific light. It is a liberation from the intellect and from the fragmented emptiness of civil life into historical destiny. The commonplace speeches at patriotic meetings, the perennial cheers for the Emperor are as pedantic as the academy. The isolated fragments of adventure for the typical student - drunkenness, duels, love affairs, are poor compensation for a life without meaning. The real meaning of life is experienced on the battlefield, in the front line, for the first time in the student's hitherto vacuous life:

"Until now we have only learnt about the world
and about life as elements in a theory, grey things
which stared at us morosely, collected together by
a lot of bloodless old men.

"But now we are soldiers and the world is aflame,
and we stand in the furnace of experience. The pale
plants of abstraction nurtured in darkness are shrinking,
and palpable shapes are thrusting upwards. We are
shown the State, the Nation, the Body, Death, not as
models on a teacher's desk, but as things we move and
breathe amongst out here in the sunlight and the hail."⁴¹

The transformational experience, the alternation from student to front-fighter, is portrayed as part of the philosophical quest for meaning and for authenticity. But yet again it is not philosophical, for it involves a total negation of intellect. The switching of worlds is an attempt to nihilate abstract thought itself. At one particular moment on the Russian Front, the narrator describes his feelings after he has been tied to a tree for three hours in a sub-zero temperature as being wrongly accused of eating iron rations. His sense of injustice dissolves before the novelty of the physical experience of his suffering, where thought becomes wordless, and finally nothing at all. "Here I stand", he proclaims, "I don't think in words which is anaemic theorising. These are thoughts without words. I think in sensations, so to speak. I experience thought."⁴² Later, too, his sense of injustice at being roughly handled by proletarian soldiers for being a student volunteer is finally resolved when he physically attacks a soldier stealing his food to gain respect all round. He has proved himself as a soldier by proving himself to be exclusively physical, and eliminating all traces of his intellectual background.

The qualities of the front-fighter which Schauwecker extols - loyalty, heroism, courage and sacrifice, are also in conflict with intellect. Bredow, the student hero of the narrator's regiment, philosophises endlessly on the uselessness of philosophy before the greater force of Fate. Of the soldier's qualities, he remarks:

"And these things don't come from the intellect. They reveal themselves in hate and surrender, on night-watches and in death, in laughter and in blood.... It (war) is all necessary and ineluctable, a great and sacred discipline."⁴³



The "sacred discipline", the compulsion to pre-ordained action, the fulfillment of the necessary task, are to Bredow the ultimate consolation which frees him from thoughts of the consequence of his actions, of the infinite number of possibilities which might arise out of the war. "Mustn't new men arise?", he speculates, "new world-ideas?... This inarticulateness of great forces takes on in my eyes at times the expression of something threatening.... There's only one solution: to be occupied. Into how many dangers have I gone, that I might find freedom from my presentiments of the future."⁴⁴

The freedom of which Bredow speaks is the negative freedom of casting into oblivion the wider significance of the war into which he has been thrust. He thinks about it endlessly, but is never forced to look for conclusions to his questions because the very nature of his environment is such that it continually deflects him from thinking about what it is. One is always "occupied" in physical tasks which ward off the horror of thinking about what they involve. Warfare becomes the final solution to the problem of intellect. The mind is compressed into the narrow region of functionality accorded to it by the exigencies of permanent struggle. For the narrator, any meaning that there is is a metaphysical winding-sheet which covers the battlefield. With intense images of elemental physical motions in the trenches, he tries to demonstrate his metaphysical quest to track it down. But, finally, it reveals itself as nothing but the revelation that the individual has ceased to exist in himself. He has graduated to the status of a collective type and become dissolved in the Whole. "I do not count", he writes, "nor does the sum of individual lives count: it is only the organic whole that counts, for in it alone lies the Meaning of war."⁴⁵

Schauwecker's warrior, the student volunteer transformed into a hardened soldier, is like Juenger's warrior, a collective type. He dissolves his own personality and sacrifices it to the "organic whole". The process of alternation revealed as a transformation of personality is also the transformation of diverse personalities into a holistic type, mass-produced by the exigencies of war. In Schauwecker's work also, the soldier is seen to be struggling against the technological leviathan. At one point in the narration, where his platoon is engaged in attack, he expresses a sense of elation at having found his way through a roaring crescendo of cannon and howitzer explosions to engage in hand-to-hand combat. The ability of the storm fighter to escape death by 'matériel' in order to confront it in the form of a human and visible enemy is one of the great and exhilarating achievements of combat in a technological war. Hand-to-hand combat is seen perversely and paradoxically as a humanizing force, for the highest degree of personal brutality and violence is nothing compared to the destruction wreaked by relentless artillery. Being the lesser of the two evils, it is no longer an evil at all, but is the warrior's capacity for human redemption, a violent destructive but humanizing force.

III

The alternation experience propounded by Juenger and Schauwecker is projected as the typical experience of the front-fighter in war. It takes no cognizance of multiple realities. There is no doubt that the experience of the First World War at first

hand prompted many writers and intellectuals to unequivocal condemnation. In England the writers like Robert Graves and the war-poets, Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Isaac Rosenberg, and in Germany Ernst Toller, Fritz von Unruh and, later, Ludwig Renn and Erich Maria Remarque, all offered on the basis of authentic experience a moral condemnation of what they had seen and suffered and a hope, too, that the experience they underwent would not again be repeated in human history. Equally, there remained within sections of the German army a diehard patriotism and a nostalgia for the Second Reich which was very distant from Juengerian nihilism. Both pacifism and patriotism, sentiments which were anathema to the new nationalist front-fighter, were attitudes that remained. In addition, many who were proud of their war-experiences found no difficulty in squaring it with the membership of the various political parties in the Weimar Republic, all of which had veterans' organisations. The war-experience produced little homogeneity of cultural or political attitudes in Germany. There was even an organised group of Jewish ex-front-fighters. The vast diversity of cultural and political affiliations in Weimar democracy was evidence that, in general, the war-experience had little effect in limiting the growth of a heterogenous political universe.

The new nationalist depiction of reality was a one-sided creation. It was totally partisan. It spoke for a section of junior officers, many of them student volunteers in their late teens and early twenties, who bore the full brunt of front-line combat. Its presentation by Juenger and Schauwecker confers upon it the status of a myth in the

Sorelian sense of the word.⁴⁶ There is no attempt to give the role of the front-fighter in the war a historical or scientific validity. The front-fighter is to be a model of inspiration for the younger generation who never fought the war. Their conceptions of a future Germany are to be guided by his actions. Their self-image is to be moulded with reference to the heroic qualities of the front-fighter which they are motivated to emulate. No myth, however, originates in a vacuum. Its originators must be close to the reality it mythologises. In myths which relate to war or revolution, there must be some initial focal point of authenticity, where the originators have participated in and contributed to the reality which they interpreted in a particular way.⁴⁷ Juenger as a war-hero, a front-fighter who was wounded on twenty separate occasions at the front and received eight decorations, including the highest award in the German army for an infantry soldier, the Pour Le Mérite, legitimated his account of the meaning of the war by his irrefutable personal involvement. The other new nationalists had similar though less spectacular biographies. The future of German nationalism in post-war Germany depended then on the myth of what happened to it in the Great War. Out of the complexity of political manoeuvring and military strategy, out of the diversity of army personnel which consisted of bureaucratised staff officers, proletarian ranks, the aristocratic officer corps, and student volunteers, out of the conflict of opinion about the nature and desirability of war, the image of the front-fighter, the new-type emerges unscathed with a war-experience so definitive that it possesses an aura of virgin purity. As Sorel said, "It is

the myth in its entirety which is alone important." It encompasses the true area of authentic experience. According to the new nationalists, the 'war-experience' is the experience of the German soldier in the Great War.

For the new-nationalists the war-experience is also a totality. Its partisan theoretical typification of the front-fighter possesses within it the typifications by the front-fighter of his world. The boundaries of his world encompass the ravaged landscape like the one Juenger described at Guillemont, the recurrent distinction between the storm battalions and the mass of troops who give weight and fire; the further distinction between what Schauwecker called the "Front and the Rear", that is the soldiers who risk their life in battle and the ossified bureaucratic structure of the staff system out of contact with events in the field. It includes the permanent confrontation with 'materiel' as an experience in which, according to Juenger, man experiences himself as fundamentally incompatible with and alienated from all forms of physical matter. It contains the constant feeling of what Schauwecker called "the natural affinity of life and death, where death destroys apparently without choice or justice",⁴⁸ and the primordial sensation of the rage "which squeezed bitter tears from (his) eyes." Above all, war is typified as a permanent feature of human activity, not as a historical aberration which erupts periodically in civilised society. All these typifications are necessary. The 'authentic myth' must seek out fundamental forms of typification which remain durable and inspirational throughout the passage of history when the source of the myth is distanced further and further from contemporary realities. Sorel

wrote, "Experience shows that the framing of the future, in some indeterminate time, may, when it is done in a certain way, be very effective."⁴⁹ The essence of the war-experience is to be transmitted from generation to generation. The experience of Germany on the battlefield is seen as having superseded Germany's defeat and made its humiliation temporary. For Juenger and Schauwecker, moreover, the war-experience is a myth of collective and not individual heroism and hence identification with the front-fighter is not an act of individual fantasy, but also an attempt to recreate the same sense of community at an indeterminate future date as that which comes out of the incredible and unforgettable human density of trench warfare, and the elating experience of marching into battle as an undifferentiated mass.⁵⁰

In its focus on alternation, the myth implies too that a return to the past is impossible. The war is a historical turning-point. It contains within it the seeds of an experience inaccessible to the previous generation, besides which their idealism and their patriotism pales into insignificance. Another new nationalist novelist, Erich Edwin Dwinger, summarises all these notions when he writes:

"We began as an army behind barbed wire, and experienced there the feeling of community. It gripped our souls so unforgettably, that our yearning will not be satisfied until we experience this feeling again; to lead such a life as a whole people without the constraining slush of Wilhelmianism which even in those days restricted us agonizingly!"⁵¹

The rejection of the past, the sense of community necessary to the efficacy of the Sorelian myth, the unequivocal anarchistic nihilism, make the vision of the new Germany one that is incompatible with the idealistic and 'staatlich' conceptions of the conservative nationalists

and also with post-war restorationism. Historical periodisation as utilised by the new nationalists demands that 1914 becomes the end of one era and the beginning of another.

There remains, however, an additional dimension which is crucial to the growth and continuity of the myth. In any alternation process, the mere experience responsible for the change cannot persist in itself through a changed environment. The majority of soldiers of the German army with experience of front-line combat returned home with the desire to lead an orderly and peaceful civilian life. The myth was confronted with the task of perpetuating itself. If it had been confined alone to the early writings of Juenger and Schauwecker, it would have almost certainly died out. But their writings gained both sustenance and credence from the fact that many of the junior officers of the German army brought the war back with them to Germany. The volunteer units of the Freikorps, set up to counter revolutionary activity in Berlin and also to defend Germany's eastern frontiers against the Poles and the Red Army, provided further fuel for the new nationalist argument. It concretized Juenger's writing above all. As the initiator and prime exponent of new nationalism in its first very sparse and solitary phase, the Freikorps, though never explicitly, became his focal point of reference.⁵² Juenger's writing, in turn, became the inspirational point of reference for the 'Freikorps' writers of the late twenties. He was a model and an example. Where in practice, Juenger as an officer in the Reichswehr and then as a science student was remote from the activities of the Freikorps, his writing acted as a source of legitimacy for their anti-bourgeois and counter-revolutionary terror. They became incorporated into the myth of the war-experience and those writers who followed Juenger applied the ideological technique to their

own Freikorps experience. Within this violent and activistic minority, theory and practice eventually became re-united.

NOTESCHAPTER II

1. Philippe Witkopf, Kriegsbriefe gefallener Studenten, Munich 1928, (English translation German Students' War letters, London, 1929)
2. *ibid.* p 61. (Eng. translation)
3. Witkopf, *op. cit.* 79
4. *ibid.* Letter of 5th November 1914. p.123
5. *ibid.* pp 69, 110.
6. A theology student writes, for example, "The strange fact is established that the more intellectually developed war is, the more horrible it becomes - for while fighting in the open is a much more primitive institution, it is at the same time much less dangerous. In our present advanced state of civilisation it is quite possible to be killed while sitting at ease in a beautifully arranged dug-out.", *ibid.* p.343.
7. *ibid.* p.162
8. Witkop *op cit.* pp 162-163. Letter dated 23rd July 1915.
9. R. Samuel and H. Thomas, Expressionism in German life, literature and thought, 1910-1924.
10. Fritz von Unruh, Der Opfergang.
11. H. Rosinski, *op. cit.* p.145. At Verdun, for example, this resulted in a disastrous extension of front-line troops beyond all physical and psychological capacity and resulted in a murderous defeat.
12. Rosinski, *op. cit.* p.150.
13. Robert Waite, Vanguard of Nazism, pp 23-24.
14. Rosinski, *op. cit.* p.148. At the end of the war most companies and even some battalions were in the hands of reserve officers whose number had increased from 29,000 in 1914 to 226,000 at the end of the war. Only 240 N.C.O.'s, all of whom had been decorated for bravery, were promoted.
15. In Stahlgewittern p.301.

16. See Bibliography.
17. The image of war as a total environment in Juenger's writings bears a strong affinity to the modern sociological study of total institutions. See, for example, Erving Goffman, Asylums, chapter 1.
18. See Berger and Luckmann, op.cit. pp 176-180. Alternation is defined here as "a form of re-socialisation....in which there is a near-total transformation; that is, in which the individual 'switches worlds'". They go on to state that this transformation is subjectively apprehended as total, although it is only partially so. When alternation results in a completely new identity for the individual - in the case of Juenger this being 'the warrior' - it is because he selectively perceives the partial change as totality. The structural situation of the storm battalions outlined above effectively satisfies their criterion that the most important condition for alternation "is the availability of an effective plausibility structure, that is, a social 'base' serving as the 'laboratory' of transformation." p.177. Once this base has disappeared the process of rationalising didactically the transformation or 'conversion' must be undergone to preserve the continuity of the belief-system emerging from the specific situation. This, as we shall see, was the exact function of the memoirs of the new nationalists.
19. Der Kampf als Inneres Erlebnis, p.18
20. In Stahlgewittern, p.263
21. *ibid.* p.285
22. "Feuer und Blut", in Werke Bk 1, p.459
23. "Feuer und Blut", op.cit. p.466
24. *ibid.* p.471
25. *ibid.* p.472
26. For a discussion of "objectivation" see Berger & Luckmann, op.cit., pp 79-82.
27. In Stahlgewittern, pp 196-197
28. Der Kampf als Inneres Erlebnis, p.78
29. See "Die Totale Mobilmachung" in Krieg und Krieger 1930 to be discussed at length in Chapter 8.

30. Der Kampf als Inneres Erlebnis, p.12
31. Der Kampf als Inneres Erlebnis, p.76
32. "Das Waeldchen 125", Werke Bd 1, p
33. "Feuer und Blut", op.cit., pp 477-478
34. "Feuer und Blut", op.cit., p.482
35. ibid. p.486
36. ibid. p.501
37. Franz Schauwecker, Der Feuerige Weg (1928) and Aufbruch der Nation, (1930).
38. Schauwecker, op.cit., p.10.
39. ibid., p.19
40. ibid., p.24
41. Schauwecker, op.cit., p.29
42. Schauwecker, op.cit., p.97
43. ibid., p.108
44. ibid., p.109
45. Schauwecker, op.cit., p.73. On the metaphysics of meaning he writes "Behind and above stands somewhere a Meaning. The Meaning smoulders and goes out, trembles dimly, melts into phosphorescence, dances like a shadow, flickers like a flame....And I am lying in the mud of the tortured earth, scratching with spade and fingernails, scraping for cover with the sweat of my body - O God! scrape my grave, burrow after the Meaning to see if I can find it in the morass with my bare fists, a step beyond the grasp of death."
46. See Georges Sorel: Reflections on Violence. "The myth must be judged as a means of acting on the present; any attempt to discuss how far it can be taken literally as future history is devoid of sense. It is the myth in its entirety which is alone important," p.126. Sorel discusses in particular the myth of the workers' 'general strike', where he claims its validity lies in the fact of producing the strongest and most intense sentiments of solidarity among the workers. Arguments about its historical effectiveness, degree of support, and so on are, according to Sorel, academic and insignificant. Juenger's 'war-experience' can be utilised in exactly the same manner as a myth to activate those who believe in it towards goals to be specified.

47. A recent example of this is revolutionary guerilla warfare. Che Guevara would not have had such an influence on the student "New Left" in western societies without his own total personal involvement. His biography as a successful guerilla leader in this sense helps to legitimate his revolutionary theories and to create the widespread support for guerilla warfare and its activistic variants among an initially non-participational Leftist audience. His violent death, in particular, was crucial to the efficacy of the 'authentic myth' of guerilla warfare, which has been similarly activated in the context of the Vietnam war.
48. Schauwecker, op.cit., p.203
49. Sorel, op.cit., p.124
50. Juenger, "Feuer und Blut", p.478ff.
51. E. E. Dwinger, Wir Rufen Deutschland: Heimkehr und Vermachtnis (1932) p.545.
52. Juenger wrote his first interpretive work, Fighting as an Inner Experience in 1922, the year in which the Freikorps campaigns virtually came to a halt and the movement began to subside.

CHAPTER III

THE ELDER STATESMEN

In the immediate years following the war, two writers issued fundamental challenges to the conception of nationalism and the conception of the German state which they claimed was responsible for the German catastrophe of 1918. They were Oswald Spengler and Moeller van der Bruck. Spengler, an anonymous high-school teacher before the war, was suddenly to become a figure of renown in Europe after the publication of his massive two-volume work, The Decline of the West. He wrote the first volume just before the outbreak of war and subsequently revised it. When it was finally published, it became a best-selling work throughout Germany, running into three editions and then going out of print. The reason for the success of Spengler's massive morphological interpretation of civilisations lay almost exclusively in what he had to say with regard to Western European culture. Utilising the distinction between culture and civilisation originating from Nietzsche, Spengler stated that every society went through a traceable pattern of growth and decline. The period of growth, the 'creative' period, was the spring, summer and autumn of a society, the period of decline was the winter, the final stage in the cycle, when society became civilisational and was characterised by a breakdown of art and creativity and the upsurge of material comfort and rational intellect.¹ According to Spengler, Western European culture had entered the winter of its decline in the nineteenth century. Although society would continue in its civilisational form long after its creativity had been spent, nonetheless the process of decline was irreversible.

The implications of this assertion for the German middle-class were self-evident. Spengler offered an electrifying version of the "Decline of the West" at a time when Germany had been defeated by West-European powers and was becoming rapidly cosmopolitanised. Beneath the terrifying spectre of Western European domination, Germans, bewildered by the collapse of the second Reich and the disintegration of the war-effort, could latch onto something which proclaimed the fundamental decadence of the victors and of their culture. Now that German culture had been swept aside, its vacuum could be filled by gloom and foreboding and by the denunciation of the West. If the West appeared victorious, according to Spengler, this was merely a superficial form of mastery which could do nothing to alter its long-term disintegration. The particular forms of inner disintegration (*Zersetzung*) which Spengler saw in Western culture were the political institutions of parliamentary democracy, the growth in technology, the emergence of the gigantic metropolis, and the growth of the popular press. Many German academics belonging to the pre-war ethos of conservative nationalism seized upon this notion of Zersetzung as evidence of the widespread civilisational decay which had contaminated the fallen Germany. Georg von Below, Edouard Meyer, Friedrich Meinecke and Karl Alexander von Muller all went some way to accepting the doctrinal lead of the solitary, non-academic figure of Spengler in rationalising the failure of all the pre-war ideals they had stood for.²

The pessimism surrounding Spengler's prophecy of long-term decline, for which he was criticised on all sides, was something which he felt necessary to specifically disavow.³ He still felt obliged to establish a blueprint for some sort of political action which might immediately reverse Germany's passage towards misfortune. In 1919, in fact, in

between the publication of the first and second volumes of his *Magnum Opus*, he wrote a polemical essay in which he tried to show his commitment to a political solution which would destroy both the imported vestiges of Western democracy and parliamentarianism and also unite the major forms of opposition to the post-war republic - namely, conservatism and socialism. This essay, called Prussianism and Socialism, arose out of a conversation with his secretary, August Albers, who following on the assassination of Kurt Eisner and the collapse of the Munich Soviet Republic had asked Spengler his opinions on the nature of socialism.⁴ To a wider public, the complimentary use of the term 'socialism' and the radical implications of much of his theorising were not nearly so gratifying as the message of his larger book. For the development of the radical right in German politics, however, the book was crucial. For it did two things. Firstly, it presented an alternative socialism to the orthodox international socialism predominant on the political left, and, secondly, it tried to show that this socialism was indeed compatible with a nationalism traditionally associated with the political right.

Indeed, the essay was to become circulated and discussed quite widely among the younger German nationalists of the post-war period. Otto Strasser has said that it was more readable, more incisive, and more immediate in its political implications than his larger work, and in nationalist circles and in the right-wing *Buende*, it circulated quite rapidly, causing great excitement.⁵ It was a seminal influence within an activist minority. It tried to show above all that socialism was not an exclusive possession of the Left and that, consequently, there was the possibility of a theoretical radicalism on the Right. According to Spengler, socialism was a catchword with which everyone

tried to characterise their beliefs. Its strongest contemporary manifestation was Marxism. Spengler, therefore, saw it as his basic task "to liberate German socialism from Marxism".

His criticism of Marx and of Marxism is fundamentally on anti-intellectual criticism. It is based upon the condemnation of the very notion of ideology and of doctrine. Socialism, for Spengler, is a form of feeling, and not a means of argument. "We late human beings of the West have become sceptics", he writes, "Ideological systems no longer make our heads whirl. Programmes belong to the previous century."⁶ Against the doctrinal dogmas of what he considered to be the main form of Marxism, Spengler juxtaposed what he called "the wordless consciousness of a socialism of the blood."⁷ He feels it necessary, however, to back this approach with a substantive historical critique of what he considered to be the deficiencies of Marxism in analysing nineteenth and twentieth century societies. He claims that Marx's main fault was to form his class-model of society on the basis purely of what was happening in England in the nineteenth century. He bases his idea of socialism on the proletariat, "the stratum of society which grows up in the world-city." According to Spengler, the industrial worker is not an enemy, but a symbol of capitalist society. "If there are other slaves of the technological age", he writes, "then he (the industrial worker) too is a slave, just as much as the engineer or the entrepreneur."⁸ Marx has mistakenly regarded him as a source of liberation by claiming for his mere factual existence the status of an idea where nothing more exists than a mere social category into which all workers fall.

The elevation of the worker to the level of an idea about the emancipation of man is fundamentally a religious conception, according

to Spengler, and follows upon the nineteenth century secularisation of the apocalyptic Christian tradition. He writes

"The words capitalism and socialism signify the good and evil of an irreligious religion. The bourgeois is the devil, the worker the angel of the new mythology, and one only needs to go a little deeper into the vulgar pathos of the Communist manifesto to recognise an autonomous Christianity behind the mask."⁹

The struggle between good and evil in Marxian terms is a struggle which takes place in a stateless society. Only by basing his class model purely upon a market economy and ignoring the state can Marx create his secular eschatology. In addition, his idea of the dispensability of the state is based upon his idea of man as a good and rational being. But, for the pessimistic Spengler, man is "a zoological animal", "a beast of prey", and on this basis alone the idea of a stateless society as a human paradise cannot be justified. To rescue the state for socialism, Spengler challenges the notion of class-struggle by relegating it to a secondary place within the purely English structure of the market capitalistic economy. In Germany, on the other hand, he sees the perfect example of socialism in a national context. In contrast to the class-divided society, German, or what he calls "Prussian socialism", is founded on a structurally based national solidarity where all types of occupation form, under the auspices of the state, a condition of complementarity. He writes, "Socialism is, purely technically speaking, the principle of officialdom (Beamtenprinzip). Every worker and every entrepreneur exhibits, in the last analysis, the character of an official."¹⁰

State socialism of this kind represents a co-ordination of all economic and political goals in the national interest. The duty of the official is to carry out that interest in the context of his specific occupation. The primacy of the national interest, according

to Spengler, makes the occupational structure, whatever its internal complexities, culturally homogeneous. Moreover, the reality of the state as a constraining and initiating factor in the promotion of the national solidarity which Spengler considers socialistic, links back to his philosophy of history, where he opposes the conventional notion of historical causality with an elusive and indefinable notion of destiny. In this sense, reality for Spengler pertains to destiny, whereas the idealism of ideologies such as Marxism dissolve themselves in the superficial rationalism of cause and effect. So it is that he writes:

"In the twentieth century we no longer believe in the power of reason over life. Knowledge of Man is more important than abstract or universal ideals; from being optimists we have become pessimists: not what ought to be, but what will be concerns us; and to become masters of reality is more important to us than to remain slaves to ideals. The logic of historical development, the linking of cause and effect, appear to us as superficial; only the logic of organic growth, of fate, of instincts felt by everyone exhibits the profundity of evolution. Marxism is an ideology. In its historical scheme are the characteristics which the materialist retains from Christianity after the power of belief has been extinguished."¹¹

The state as the pre-existent instrument of socialism is the arbiter of a readily available reality which eschews the need for ideals about any future earthly paradise, any secularised utopia which finds its justification in the idea of historical progression. For Spengler, it is quite useless to try and prove that such a thing exists. Quite simply, he says, "life has no purpose. Humanity has no purpose." In addition, reality is particularistic. In true socialism there is no humanistic universality. "We are human beings", he writes, "of a particular century, nation, location and type."¹² The state ultimately is living proof of the

master of reality. It is the framework of constraint within which man as a zoological animal finds sustenance and self-expression for the "socialism of the blood".

On Spengler's analysis, it is evident that in any conventional and intelligible sense he has severed the connection between socialism and revolution. For, if socialism already exists, then revolutions are not needed to institute it. On this account he attacks the leftist notion of socialist revolution and, in particular, the events of 1918, which he sees as those of a sham revolution. It was the result, he claimed, of the military ascendancy of the Allies at the end of the war. The revolutionaries cashed in on the successful struggle of "capitalist" England against "socialist" Germany. The revolution was, therefore, a contradiction of the principles of socialism - a parasitical act which depended upon the prior destruction of Germany by its national enemy. The historical frame of reference in which Spengler operated, that is, by looking back in conservative fashion to the age of Bismarck as the age of true socialism, had its repercussions in his analysis of the socialist movement. At the time when the movement exhibited all those disciplinary features characteristic of the Prussian state under "the iron hand of Bebel", it was truly socialistic.¹³ Yet, in this sense, its socialism was derivative - a function of its proximity to the state rather than of any autonomous doctrine. In this way, Spengler can criticise the more ideologised revolutionary socialism of the Spartacists and the intellectuals as being a manifestation of the disintegration of the socialist movement.

Spengler's characterisation of "Prussian socialism" as the cultural homogeneity induced by disciplined service to the state

provided an utterly fascinating reversal of the sociological critique of bureaucracy which had been started by Max Weber and Robert Michels. Spengler does not deny the growth of bureaucracy in politics. But neither does he condemn it. In fact, he regards genuine socialism as being bureaucratic in its very nature. Bureaucracy is the genuine socialist alternative to ideology! Socialism bureaucratized becomes Prussian socialism, whereas socialism ideologised is Marxism, minority activism and internationalism. All the latter manifestations are disintegrative and ephemeral. The events of 1918 showed them all well to the fore. Spengler castigates the anarchism and the bohemian predispositions of the leftist intelligentsia, whom he holds responsible for the revolution. Indeed he regards the history of revolutions largely in terms of a minority seizure of power by a group of disaffected intellectuals. While this might be valid for other European countries, it is not valid for Germany. A minority cannot ever become a majority in Germany, as the Jacobins did in France or the Bolsheviks in Russia. In addition, Spengler regards the leftist revolutionary elites as lacking any pride in themselves. He says that their ruthlessness lay essentially in a devaluation of their own importance. "The Jacobins were ready to sacrifice everything else", he writes, "because they were ready to sacrifice themselves".¹⁴

For Spengler, true revolution is a phenomenon which must involve the mobilisation of a whole people, not a minority-inspired eruption. "A true revolution", he writes, "is nothing less than a whole people, an outcry, a brazen thrust, a purpose and a rage."¹⁵ In Germany this occurred not in 1918 but in 1914, on the outbreak of war. The moment of national unification created by the mobilisation for war was the true moment of socialist solidarity. Socialism, of the Prussian kind, is

inseparable from war. Its zenith is attained in those moments of German history where the reality of war draws the German people together. Carried away by his vision of revolution as war, Spengler denies that German socialists are revolutionaries. "No, we are not revolutionaries", he writes, "No emergency, no press, no party can call forth a disorderly uprising which possesses the sheer strength as that of 1813, 1870 and 1914."¹⁶ Yet, at the same time, there is no doubt that for Spengler the declaration of war is the true revolutionary act of the nation. War between nations is a permanent state of mankind, and the real history of nations is not subject to historical progression. The idea of international socialism therefore, states Spengler, is totally vacuous. The only possible end to conflict is not the Marxist paradise of a classless society, but the death of men and the death of nations themselves. Anyone who denies the omnipotence of death is indulging in self-delusory fantasies. That is the true reality of a national socialism. "Man does not express ideas", he writes, "The artist may imagine, the thinker may feel, but the statesman and the soldier project themselves into reality."¹⁷

After the failure of the 1918 revolution, the only real historical possibility, according to Spengler, is that of Prussian socialism. Marxist proletarianism has proved itself to be a limiting historical case. Its hour has passed. Instead, the future lies with the nationalist youth of Germany. It is to them that Spengler makes his final dramatic appeal. Having dismissed leftist revolution as the work of self-sacrificial intellectual minorities, Spengler outlines his own socialistic elite prepared at a moment's notice to dig the grave of intellect:

"I turn to youth. I call upon all those who have marrow in their bones and blood in their veins. Educate yourselves! Become men! We don't want any more ideologists, no more talk about culture and world-citizenship and the spiritual mission of the Germans. We need hardness, a bold scepticism. We need a class of socialist supermen."¹⁸

The call for education is synonymous with the dismissal of ideologies, of culture and generally of all traditional forms of learning. Awareness, in the Spenglerian sense, is much akin to the Juengerian delineation of the front-fighter's awareness in war - A world where first-hand experience invalidates the significance of ideas. The elite of socialist supermen, advocated by a man who, pages before, had professed his disgust for all revolutionary elites, is linked to the warrior-type which Juenger was to construct in his war-memoirs. Spengler, in fact, saw as the prize example of the "socialism of the blood" the *gemeinschaft* experience of the front-fighter in the war, and there is no doubt that he saw this wordless affectivity as the basis of the fate of Germany in the years to come.

II

While Spengler, despite the popularity of his main work, tended to be a somewhat isolated and remote figure in the early twenties;¹⁹ Arthur Moeller van der Bruck was the leader of a somewhat exclusive intellectual circle in post-war Berlin known as the Juni-Klub. It derived its name from the month of the signing of the Versailles Treaty in June 1919. The meetings of the club were attended by such people as Hans Grimm, the novelist of Volk Ohne Raum, Martin Spahn, the historian, Hans Blueher, the Youth movement leader, and Otto Strasser, one of the

early national-socialist leaders in North Germany. The group published a periodical called Gewissen, in which many of Moeller van der Bruck's writings were first published. Its intent was both serious and theoretical. It wished, in the words of its programme note, to pledge itself to struggle "against the lack of conscience which is the most conspicuous feature of our age."²⁰

Moeller's most famous work was The Third Reich. First published in 1923, its continuous influence throughout the years of the Republic can be gauged by the acclaim accorded to the third edition brought out in 1931 by the Hanseatische Verlag at Hamburg. This extended to most right-wing circles including the national-socialists. Goebbels, in fact, was prompted to acclaim it in no uncertain terms. What enraptured right-wing radicals most of all was the visionary and utopian nature of the book. In contrast to the ambiguities of Spenglerian pessimism, Moeller struck a firm note of inspiration when he cast his book in the light of a vision of Germany's future greatness. This is made immediately clear in a prefatory letter to Heinrich von Gleichen. Moeller states here that it was his clear intention to offer "instead of government by party....the ideal of the Third Empire."²¹ The Third Empire claimed, quite naturally, its historical lineage in the First and Second German empires of Otto and of Bismarck. The notion was conservative, but at the same time futuristic. Moeller's ideal was the starting point of a conservative revolution - a demand for the revolutionary transformation of society into a new form in which Germany could reclaim its national-historical heritage. The ideal was initially philosophical, but Moeller claimed that, like all true philosophies, it had to be translated into reality, and this would have to be done by political means. In the confused post-war period in

which he was writing, he claimed "It will be an Empire of organisation in the midst of European chaos."²²

Like Spengler, Moeller's starting-point is essentially an intellectual reaction to the 1918 revolution. He states quite categorically that a revolution never took place. What occurred was an 'insurrection' conducted by a bohemian minority. The mass of the people weren't involved. Germany had lost its chance. There is a difference, according to Moeller, between war and revolution. A war may be temporarily lost, but the peace is never final, whereas "a revolution occurs once only". Moeller lays the blame for the lost opportunity of the German revolution, not on the masses, but on their Leftist leaders, "those revolutionary literati with their cultural politics (who) have no thought beyond such trivia as the suffrages and ballot-boxes."²³ The leaders became corrupted by liberalism and by the flirtation with Western Parliamentarianism. Instead of mobilising the nation, they opted for the degenerate politics of the party machine. Moeller's *bête noire*, liberalism, is seen as the conspiratorial seed behind every left-wing movement. It is none the less hateful to him for the vague and amorphous light in which he casts it. Rationalism is a philosophical legacy of both Marxism and liberalism. Marx is a 'homeless rationalist'. Both ideologies appeal to rootless Jewish intellectuals. At one point, liberalism refers to the pragmatism of party politics which he abhors; at another, to the very principle of political democracy which he dislikes just as much. Most of all, liberalism is a universal creed directed to the whole of mankind. In this sense, says Moeller, "liberalism is the death of nations". Rootlessness, universality, pragmatism, materialism, are intermixed into the soup's cauldron of European liberal-Marxism. At one point, the whole horror of it all is

attributed, in a totally paranoid way, to a conspiracy of Freemasons throughout Europe.

Moeller then rejected Left revolution, because he claimed that it could not fail to be contaminated by liberalism and international humanitarianism. His critique of the Left was much more ineffectual and much less incisive than Spengler's. His hatred and paranoia seem to have had a convulsive effect upon his thinking. In his attack on reactionary patriotism, however, he is, given the esoteric frame of reference in which he was working, much more incisive. He stated quite categorically what Spengler had omitted to say - that, for the post-war German nationalist, there could be no return to pre-war conservative nationalism. One of the first things he does is to take to task the post-war restorationists for their inability to extend their nationalistic resentment at the humiliation of the Versailles Treaty to a critique of post-war German society as a whole. "The conservative counter-movement", he says, "seems haphazard and aimless. It has no definite tendencies, except the general one of trying to escape from the bonds imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, of trying to find an exit from the wartime prison into which our enemies have pinned us."²⁴ Hence, Moeller distinguishes conservatism from those sources and sentiments with which it is traditionally associated - namely, the upper middle-class patriotic and monarchist circles in German politics which gave backing to the German Nationalist Party. The true conservative cannot be suffused with nostalgia for an age which led Germany into disaster. Moeller writes:

"Restorations are futile things, valued only by emigrés who have freed themselves from the responsibility of patriotism but are willing to return to their own arm-chairs....a conviction is growing, a conviction which is one of the few held in common by our disintegrated nation, that we have turned our backs for ever on everything connected with the age of William II."²⁵

Moeller thus combines criticism of reaction with that of putschist activism. For him, the Kapp Putsch and the assassination of Rathenau, acts which were to be revered by new nationalists such as Ernst von Salomon as embryonic revolutionary events,²⁶ were symptomatic of the post-war nationalist drift into unsystematic and unprogrammatic resentment against national humiliation.

His estimation of all conservative counter-movements in Europe, including fascism, as reactionary,²⁷ leads him on to a point where he contemplates some sort of socialistic alliance between the extreme left and the extreme right. The notion of this new socialism is, however, fraught with ambiguities, and seems to depend very arbitrarily on the direction in which he levels his criticisms. Having taken on the task of criticising Marxism, liberalism and reaction, Moeller occasionally finds himself slipping into the habit of compromising with one of these standpoints in order to more successfully attack another. Thus, when he speaks of Marxism, he describes the proletarian as "a community of misery", a vast degraded pool of humanity into which "every third man may any day sink." But the younger generation find it intolerable that Germany might turn into a proletarian nation. "These men of the younger generation", he writes, "who will not be proletarians, are Germans out of self-respect."²⁸ Like Spengler before him and Sombart after him, Moeller utilises this distinction between "German" and "proletarian" socialism.²⁹ The term "proletarian", in fact, became an epithet of degradation and for right-radical thinkers a special and limiting esoteric usage of Marxism. It appealed to the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois fear of proletarianisation which became so widespread during the years after the war, and again during the Great Depression. In drawing up his stereotype of the "reactionary", however, Moeller

reverses his argument completely and sings the praises of the proletarian. In referring to his vision of a conservative revolution, Moeller makes it clear that it is the proletarian and not the reactionary who participates in this war of liberation! The reactionary, in despising the proletarian, hinders the alliance of the political extremes:

"The reactionary fails to see that the war of liberation led by the oppressed sector of an oppressed nation will be a war of world ideals, 'a peoples' war', directed not against ourselves but against the world-bourgeoisie - to whom we are being sacrificed. If we win the final war, we shall thereby win back the Empire for ourselves, not the Empire of the reactionary's dreams, but the EMPIRE OF US ALL."³⁰

Moeller's ambivalent aristocratic hatred and mistrust of the proletariat dissolves when he confronts the reactionary whom he regards as his greater enemy. In fact, he sets an important precedent for right-radical ideology when he states as his two main enemies, liberalism and reaction, against which nationalism and socialism are seen as the two antitheses. Under the wing of the nation, the proletariat, distrusted as an autonomous category and even more as a theoretical concept, now comes to find its rightful place. In addition, nationalism and socialism, now freed of their reactionary and Marxist connotations respectively, are regarded by Moeller as subordinate components of the doctrine of conservatism. The conservative, the final stereotype in Moeller's book of stereotypes, is ultimately superior to both the reactionary, with whom he holds in common a commitment to Germany, and the revolutionary, with whom he holds in common a commitment to radical social change. Both in opposite ways, are mundanely political, whereas the conservative revolution is, for Moeller, fundamentally spiritual. "Our revolution", he states, "begins with a resurrection in men's souls." It seeks out in them a renewal of

all that is good in the history of Germany, and in "the mighty river of German history which ever seeks to regain its bed." It taps the eternal residue of unspecified and, by implication, unspecifiable qualities which are uniquely German.

On the face of it, Moeller's conservatism seems, superficially, to be circumscribed by that same woolly and muddle-headed idealism of the patriotic professors of 1914, most of whom, no doubt, he would have regarded as reactionary. In a sense, however, the whole momentum of his characterisation of conservatism has its deeper roots in Nietzsche's conception of 'eternal recurrence'. (Ewiges Wiederkehr). Moeller conceived of history as cyclical, in which distant historical events will always intrude upon the present as indications of the future that lies ahead. Life is a continual process of resurgence and renewal. Values are eternal. By their very nature they come back into history at the very moment when their distance and remoteness from it seem irrevocable. "Stable values", he writes, "spring from tradition. We may be victims of catastrophes which overtake us, of revolutions we cannot prevent, but tradition always re-emerges."³¹ There is a historical "law" of movement which ensures that values, after a long period of hibernation, re-emerge to renew the quality of life in society. It is the conservative who is the true beneficiary of this process. Revolution, for the conservative, is the process of reclaiming eternity. Moeller writes "Conservatism has eternity for it. The cosmos itself, spinning on the axis of law, is no revolution but one of conservative statics. Nature is conservative....If we were to suppose for one moment the revolutionary were to succeed in annihilating all traces of the previous social order, on that same day the conservative law of movement would reassert itself."³³

It is very clear that Moeller is not merely advocating an anti-revolutionary revolution in which the conservative is the antithesis of the revolutionary, but is utilising the type of insight made by Tocqueville in his writings on the French Revolution, namely that the revolutionary regime carries out many of the features - in Tocqueville's case, political and administrative centralisation - which were policies of the old order. For Moeller it is the conservative who capitalises on the process of revolution because, in the attempt to reassert stability after a period of disorder, appeals have to be made to the historical legacy of the nation. In this way, he can look upon Lenin, despite his ideological commitment to Marxism, as a genuine conservative revolutionary, and revolution, in its Thermidorean context, as a process of stabilisation and renewal. Moeller's conservative revolution differs from left-socialist revolution by worshipping precisely those forms of Thermidorean revanche which the Left has often regarded as the betrayal of revolution. Moeller recognised that the post-revolutionary process of political stabilisation was one which played into the conservatives' hands with a vengeance, and mistakenly thought in addition that it would be one in which ideology itself would be relegated to a role of minor importance.

In the same way that Moeller's notion of conservatism is based upon a neo-Nietzschean conception of eternal recurrence, Moeller's vision of the Third Reich is a variant of the Nietzschean conception of the will-to-power, and the two become interlinked. He writes:

"All great men have been conservative and felt, like Nietzsche, 'I want to be right, not for today and not for tomorrow, but for centuries to come.'
Conservative thought does not believe in progress; it rather holds that 'history' has her great moments which appear and vanish, and that the most man can do is try to give permanence to them when they come.

"The reactionary creates nothing. The revolutionary only destroys....The conservative creates by giving to phenomena a form in which they can endure."³⁴

The will to power is to attempt to give "to phenomena a form in which they can endure" - namely, by the creation of the Third Reich. The Third Reich is created by a "third" party of conservatives. "The third party", says Moeller, "wills the Third Reich."³⁵ The Third Reich is the German Empire which benefits ultimately from the mobilisation of revolutionary forces whose momentum takes them beyond the control of the revolutionaries. In the immediate context of German history, this meant for Moeller that the 1918 "insurrection" had unleashed the forces of disaffection which had outlasted it both on the extreme right and the extreme left, and under the wing of the "conservative", their joint aspirations of nationalism and socialism would provide the foundation for the creation of the Third Reich. Their role as harnessed revolutionary forces was to usher in, by socially dynamic means, the enduring forms of social stabilisation and order. The basis of the German nationalism which he saw as the political movement of the future was that which willed the Third Reich into existence. "German nationalism", he writes "fights for the possible Reich".³⁶ Moeller's dream of imperial domination and his justification of it as a legitimate form of nationalism was the cornerstone of post-war German nationalism. The utopian vision of the Third Reich emerged from the dark shadows of pessimism which engulfed German thought and even Moeller himself.

In essence the writings of Spengler and Moeller were a counter-response to the destruction of the Second Reich and the 1918 revolution. Embedded in them is that 're-active' feeling³⁷ of resentment which Nietzsche describes in The Genealogy of Morals. But this was not

Judeo-Christian resentment against the barbarian, the aristocratic and the strong. It was the resentment of the superficially strong against those progressive and revolutionary forces which Nietzsche had himself attacked as symptoms of Judeo-Christian decadence. Nietzsche's disciples displayed the very malaise he attributed to his (and their) opponents. They resented the revolutionary threat to order. It was a case of the strong resenting the weak rather than the weak resenting the strong. But here the strong had to expropriate the weapons of the weak and the decadent in order to ensure their very survival. German autocracy had been shaken to the roots and had to borrow from the enemies it resented to renew the illusion of its aristocratic strength. Moeller had written "Movement begets counter-movement. When Marxism was swamped in democratic chaos, Nietzsche with his concept of aristocracy came to the fore."³⁸ He hoped that with the idea of the Third Reich, history would repeat itself and the 'resentful' strong finally triumph.

Both Spengler and Moeller were to be sources of inspiration in the twenties for the small but volatile Nazi party. Spengler's essay "The Reconstruction of the German Reich" was to have a substantial impact on Gregor Strasser who wrote to Spengler to tell him that it was "a mine of highly constructive and realistic practical politics".³⁹ When Spengler expressed his scepticism about the possibilities of easily translating his ideas in practical politics, Strasser pressed on regardless with plans for a social revolution along Spenglerian lines. Moeller too was popular with the early Nazis. Goebbels acclaimed The Third Reich with the words "Why isn't he one of us?"⁴⁰ But Moeller's invitation to Hitler to speak to the Juniklub shortly before his tragic death was disastrous. The former's reservations about Hitler's beer-hall oratory was a precedent for the later objections to the Nazi leaders demagoguery among the revolutionary-nationalists.

As it was, with Moeller's suicide, the vexed question of how he might have fared in the following years which saw the rise of Nazism was never to be answered. Spengler who lived on never became an active force in politics or intellectual life. He remained something of a recluse and while cautiously supporting the national-socialists regarded the euporic mass enthusiasm of the movement as escapist and utopian. His later works such as Man and Technics never enabled him to recapture his earlier influence, and when the Nazis came to power in 1933, he was scarcely thought an intellectual force to be reckoned with. His "socialism of the blood" already had its protagonists and despite his pessimism, German nationalists could see in their own brutal and barbaric life-style the makings of a "race of socialist supermen". One thing was certain. Both Spengler and Moeller had laid the foundations for the resurrection of conservatism in an unrecognisable form. For they both laid claim to a statement which in pre-war Germany would almost have been impossible:- the revolution of left must occur in order for the conservative revolution to triumph.

NOTESCHAPTER III

1. See especially Chapter 4, "The Soul of the City", pp 85-111, Volume I of Spengler's work.
2. See Fritz K. Ringer, The Decline of the German Manderins, p.223 ff.
3. This he did, in a talk entitled "Pessimismus?" given in 1921. See Reden und Aufsätze, p.66 ff.
4. H. Stuart Hughes, Oswald Spengler, p.106.
5. Otto Strasser, History in my Time, p.201 ff. See also the remarks by Albert Speer in his recent memoirs Erinnerungen p.16
6. Spengler, Preussentum und Sozialismus, p.2.
7. *ibid.*, p.5.
8. *ibid.*, p.69
9. Spengler, *op. cit.*, p.74.
10. *ibid.*, p.78.
11. Spengler, *op. cit.*, pp 80-81.
12. *ibid.*, p.85.
13. Spengler, *op. cit.*, p.13.
14. Spengler, *op. cit.*, p.15.
15. Spengler, *op. cit.*, p.15.
16. *ibid.*, p.14.
17. *ibid.*, p.84.
18. Spengler, *op. cit.*, p.99.
19. Spengler did give formal lectures and engage in discussion at political meetings, but had no discernable group of protégés or disciples grouped around him. The anti-romanticisms and anti-idealism of some of his speeches such as "The Political Duties of German Youth" which he delivered at a Youth meeting in Wuerzburg under the auspices of the Hochschulring Deutscher Art, a student movement in sympathy with his earlier work, disappointed some members of his wider audience as he called for a study of politics rather than any immediate programme of action. Politically he remained a highly individualistic dilettante. See Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp 112-113.

20. Quoted in Fritz Stern, The Politics of Cultural Despair, p.226.
21. Arthur Moeller van der Bruck, Das Dritte Reich, p.13
22. Moeller van der Bruck, op. cit., p.15.
23. *ibid.*, p.23.
24. Moeller, op. cit., p.188.
25. Moeller, op. cit., p.34.
26. To be discussed in Chapter Five.
27. He excludes from this Russia, where he claims "autocracy has been established by Bolshevism in a peculiarly Russian, genuine Muscovite style, and from its centre in the Kremlin rules over the capital and the giant empire." *ibid.*, p.188.
28. Moeller, op. cit., p.166
29. Sombart first made the distinction in his mammoth two-volume work published in 1924, Der proletarische Sozialismus. It was also used to some extent by Graf von Reventlow and Otto Strasser. See bibliography.
30. Moeller, op. cit., p.199.
31. Moeller, op. cit., p.24.
32. *ibid.*, p.219.
33. Moeller, op. cit., pp 223, 233.
34. Moeller, op. cit., p.197.
35. *ibid.*, p.250.
36. Moeller op. cit., p.263.
37. For a wider application of the term "re-action" to the fascist attitude to the revolutionary left, see Ernst Nolte Three Faces of Fascism, p.196 ff.
38. Moeller op. cit., p.215.
39. Letter of 8/7/1925 in Spengler Briefe, p.398. See also Strasser's following letter (8/7/25) p.397 ff.
40. J. Goebbels Early Diaries, p.97.

CHAPTER IV

Revenge

After the armistice of 1918, Germany was torn apart for the next four years by endless civil strife. After the November Revolution there emerged in Berlin a workers' Soviet Republic, in which the Spartacists, under the leadership of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, played a dominant role. In Munich, a similar Soviet Republic was set up by Kurt Eisner. In addition, after full-scale demobilisation, Spartacists seized power from the Republicans in various cities where there was no Republican army. In the early months of 1919, the Spartacists took over Bremen, Muhlheim and Halle. Gustav Noske, the Reich Minister of Defence, was forced to use groups of demobilised volunteer soldiers to crush these leftist seizures of power. These military bands were known as the Freikorps. They went on to fight campaigns in the Baltic and on Germany's eastern frontiers against the Poles and the Red Army. In March 1920, one of the most famous of the Freikorps, the brigade of Captain Hermann Ehrhardt, was the instrument of the Kapp-Luettwitz putsch in Berlin. Later, when the putsch collapsed and the Freikorps were officially dissolved, many of Ehrhardt's brigade became part of his terrorist organisation, Organisation Consul, which was responsible for the assassination of Mathias Erzbuenger and Walter Rathenau.

The Freikorps, in terms of sociological composition, were generally confined to the particular age and social stratum which constituted the front-line junior officers of the war. The one-year volunteers (Einjaehrigen), who had left school at the age of sixteen and above all gained commissions in the army as the war expanded,

found little opportunity for a career in the peacetime Reichswehr so drastically diminished in size. In the Freikorps, however, they were able to continue their "sturm" activities in a different setting. While officers of the rank of major and above, as well as staff officers, were hardly to be seen in the Freikorps, an abundance of former Einjaehrige captains and lieutenants filled the brigades.¹

In this respect they were similar to the squadristi of Mussolini's Fascist Party in Italy. Their sense of outrage at national humiliation and left-wing revolution mobilised them to participate in extensive counter-revolutionary terror. Whereas Italian Fascism developed within the framework of an organised political opposition movement, the Freikorps terrorist campaigns against the revolutionary socialists was officially sanctioned by the new Social-democrat Republic. The vicious satirical drawings of George Grosz show quite clearly how much the extreme Left regarded the Freikorps as mindless and sadistic lackeys of reaction for this very reason. The brutal terrorist methods they used in destroying the socialist basis of power in many German cities made them widely feared by the majority of the population, detested by the working-class, and regarded in a favourable light only by the conservative nationalists of the middle and upper middle class, who saw them as the last line of defence against the red terror. Yet, their political role was clearly at odds with their nihilistic and "soldatisch" sentiments. About their real nature there remained in the eyes of many bourgeois Germans a certain ambivalence which finally crystallised by 1922 into fear and distrust of the unprogrammatic terrorist campaigns and assassinations of the O.C.

Initially, however, they gained much sympathy from young nationalist admirers - one might almost term them their junior schoolfellows - who had felt robbed of a chance to fight in the war. As with the Italian Fascists, large numbers of university students flocked to join them. In the Baltic campaign, two of the Freikorps were integrally composed of students, one of them from the Marburg Students Corps and a second composed of students from Tuebingen, Stuttgart and Hehenheim.² Captain Von Epp's brigade, which destroyed the Soviet Republic in Munich, had large numbers of students from Erlangen and Tuebingen. At Erlangen university, in fact, a thousand out of twelve hundred undergraduates sought to close the university and force the entire student population to join the Freikorps.³ The myth of the war-experience itself was perpetuated within university nationalist circles by the many thousands of demobilised officers who enrolled for university courses in the years following the armistice. The fact of Freikorps leaders in their cities parading their 'heroic' virtues gave weight to a cult of student hero-worship for leading officers like Ehrhardt, who were usually no more than the age of their elder brothers.⁴

In the Youth Movement, too, the influence of the Freikorps was felt. The movement in general had been fragmented by the overwhelming politicisation of social life in the first years of the Republic, and the small Buende had to compete with the newly constituted youth movements of the mass political parties.⁵ The non-partisan youth groups were greatly influenced by the "Kampfbuende" formed by brigades in the Freikorps which had for military purposes been dissolved. Thus, Ehrhardt founded the "Viking" Bund; the Bund Oberland was

formed under the leadership of Beppo Röhmer and "Werewolf" under the leadership of Fritz Kloppe.⁶ In such an atmosphere, anti-bourgeois traits in the pre-war Youth Movement altered quite radically from a predominantly romanticist and arcadian desire for refuge from the bourgeois confinements of urban life to a more trenchant commitment to political action. But it became divided between left and right, and generally speaking, fragmented. Moreover, civil war, the campaigns in the East, and political terrorism offered more direct and more immediate forms of anti-bourgeois existence.

The legacy of violence left by the war was accepted very widely among middle-class youth. When Thomas Mann, after abandoning the orthodox nationalism of his Reflections of an unpolitical man, gave a lecture at the Beethovensaal in Berlin in defence of the Republic, the student section of his audience became hostile at his condemnation of the war and the brutality it had caused.⁷ They remained impervious to his exhortation to support the Republic as the true heritage of a new Germany. In some universities anti-war remarks caused great outrage among nationalist professors and student corporations. At Heidelberg, Emil Gumbel was subject to intense academic harassment for claiming that German soldiers in the war had lost their lives in a dreadful way. For a similar type of remark, Theodor Lessing was forced to leave the Technical Institute at Hanover.⁸ The pacifist and communist slogan, "no more wars" (Nicht mehr Kriege), was anathema to those who desperately sought legitimacy for the war they were too young to fight.

Under such circumstances, it was easy to see in the Freikorps the legacy of the German soldier in war, continuing, like true patriots, to defend the Fatherland. It is to be doubted, if we are

to take the first-hand evidence of the Freikorps fighters, just how far it was any such thing. Of those whose testimonies are crucial to understanding the nature of the radicalisation of Freikorps nationalism, two writers in particular, both members of Ehrhardt's brigade, are of major significance. These were Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz and Ernst von Salomon. Salomon's novel, The Outlaws, published in 1929, and his essay for the 1930 Juenger symposium on war, are, culturally and politically, the most perceptive documents of the nature of the Freikorps ethos, and its striving for a radically new conception of nationalism, not so much as a basis for its activities, but as a means of post-hoc rationalisation of its role and significance in post-war Germany. The type of writing used by the new nationalists, or national-revolutionaries,⁹ revealed much about the nature and the purpose of their writing. Their style, expressing itself through a variety of forms - notebooks, diaries, autobiographies, novels and reminiscences, was what one might call documentary. It followed in the footsteps of the earlier writings of Juenger and Schauwecker. In essence, what was involved was an attempt to recall factual events in a highly dramatised and often poetically descriptive form. The literary master of this technique was, of course, Juenger himself, but it was a feature the new nationalists came to use, at varying levels of effectiveness. This documentary style naturally tended to blur the edges between fact and fiction. In writing of events that have occurred several years before, it is difficult to disentangle the degree of post-hoc rationalisation or interpretation that the author has placed into the mouths of the individuals or characters concerned. Nonetheless,

the documentary style depended above all on the claim to first-hand authenticity - a personal experience of the events involved. This was the essence of Juenger's work, and the essence of the work of those who were influenced by him. This is true of the more important writers - Salomon, Heinz, Werner Beumelberg and Erich Dwinger, and also of the less literate Freikorps leaders who attempted, sometimes rather painfully, to write their memoirs.¹⁰

The basic starting point of the account given by Salomon and Heinz of the Freikorps ethos is that of conflict as an end in itself; of conflict as a way of life. Equally, they took up in the context of their own experiences Juenger's assertion that war knows no boundaries, no frontiers. What social psychologists have sometimes referred to as "the functional autonomy of motives"¹¹ is a recurrent motif in their work. The main feature of the Freikorps was that the search for enemies in the interests of the continuation of conflict had outlasted the war. Heinz writes:

"People told us the war was over. That made us laugh. We ourselves are the war.... We marched onto the post-war battle-fields just as we had gone into battle on the Western Front."¹²

In his essay for the Juenger symposium, Salomon re-echoes this sentiment. "The war came to an end", he writes, "but the warriors continued to march on.... The war had its own laws. What was good enough for the war was good enough for the period after the war."¹³ Certainly, in the writings of both of them, the same images of slaughter and brutality persist as in Juenger's evocation of the slaughter at the front. Dead men fall down at Salomon's side like flies, but do not distract from his rage to kill. Unlike the war at the front, however, the enemy was more varied. In The Outlaws, the Freikorps hatred was against all enemies, whether Poles or

Spartacists or unarmed citizens, with equal intensity. The atrocity was totally indiscriminate. All enemies, civilians or soldiers, armed or defenceless, fell victim to the rage for blood. The war had returned to civil society with a vengeance. The destructiveness which had been nurtured on the battlefields of the front returned to ravage the nation which had ultimately failed its most destructive fighters.

The fundamental difference, however, was that the Freikorps was no longer part of the German army. The Reichswehr, diminished so drastically in size and confined, by and large, in its officer stratum to the aristocratic, upper middle-class circles and to families with an army tradition, was an alien institution. For the Freikorps, the army had lost its legitimacy, its claim to be the true military arm of Germany. Its class privilege and its ineffectuality were a source of both resentment and contempt respectively. The changing of environment, the switching of worlds, which Juenger had proclaimed so ecstatically, meant that the "warrior", the front-fighter, had lost his political claim to legitimacy. He was no longer part of the German army and, as we shall see, the German army was not part of the front-fighter's vision of Germany. The front-fighter experience forged in the service for the Second Reich perpetuated itself in the Freikorps after the Second Reich had collapsed in ignominy. The institutional context of violence had been destroyed and the legitimacy of the army as an institution severely shaken. The junior officer stratum upon which the army had been so dependent now looked upon the army with contempt.

Although the state nominally commanded the allegiance of the Freikorps, the allegiance was fragile and periodically destroyed. As the Freikorps campaigns switched dizzily from German cities to the Eastern Front and then back again to the Kapp putsch in Berlin and the 'liberation' of the Ruhr, the loyalty of the Freikorps became whittled down to nothing more than a faith in their own leaders, and a commitment to fight irrespective of the legality of the battle that was offered them. It was the Freikorps, in fact, which provided the basis for Juenger's vision of a "storm elite" of mid-Europe, prepared at a moment's notice to change the direction of its aggression in search of even newer enemies. They were, in the title of Salomon's novel, genuine "outlaws". They were bereft of legitimacy, finding in all sections of the nation an unsoldierly and bourgeois attitude to life which contradicted their own brutal and destructive life-style. Juenger's vision of the new warrior, the new type who emerged from the Front, was undoubtedly a Freikorps man. Their actions were destructive. They held most human values in contempt. Their activism was nihilistic. They had few positive or constructive ideas about the future of Germany. If, in the military sense they showed exceptional courage and discipline, this merely indicated that their anarchic tendencies were collective in nature rather than individualistic. Their action echoed Juenger's words, "Not why we fight, but how we fight is the essential thing." In the last analysis, their destructive capacity was for the asking of almost anybody who wanted to use it.

Salomon recalled the practical implications of this policy, or lack of policy, with regret. For Juenger's philosophy of adventure found its reality in an adventurism which was politically aimless, of infinite plasticity, and lacking in any sense of ultimate achievement.

Historically, according to Salomon, this meant that the movement was prone to incredible self-contradictions. He laments:

"We who were fighting under the old colours, had saved the country from chaos, God forgive us. We had sinned against the spirit. We thought we were saving the country, and we were only saving the bourgeoisie."¹⁴

For some, too, the desirability of a putsch was justified in revolutionary terms, while for others it was counter-revolutionary. As in the case of the Kapp putsch, carried out militarily speaking, with great ease, there was little co-ordination between the leaders of the brigades involved, no conception of an alternative political regime, and little attempt to proselytise to the population at large.¹⁵ If the front-fighter could be portrayed as the archetypal German at war, the Freikorps man could hardly be seen as the archetypal German of peacetime. As adventurers prey to the requirements of political stability, revolutionaries fulfilling the role of counter-revolution, the self-contradictions of their actions was not only a result of political naivety, but also of the growing pluralism and heterogeneity of political forces in post-war Germany. War in civil society, by definition, lacks the homogeneity of national mobilisation. The nation as a reality had become a number of fragmented and conflicting forces with the Freikorps as, almost literally, the potential friend or enemy of all of them.

To the new nationalists it soon became evident that, if the nation was no longer a reality of which they approved, then it would have to become a myth. It would have to be totally distant and remote from the reality of post-war Germany. It would have to become an ideal inconsonant with the present political state, only to be achieved by revolutionary action. The theme of the sudden revelation of the "idea"

of the nation runs through the new nationalist writings. In Arnolt Bronnen's novel, O.S., Bergerhoff, a Freikorps fighter in Upper Silesia, says of the predicament of his fellow-soldiers there:

"There we were....just a handful of us, scattered, isolated, as busy as could be, and all at once we were mastered by this idea of a nation which fell upon us like a sickness. We became the mysterious and happy instruments of the nation; the destiny and life of our people still inspire us. But monsters stir in our hearts. How can we understand that the government of our own nation should have betrayed us, their destiny, their instrument! We were fighting for Germany and Germany has destroyed us in the very moment of our triumph."¹⁶

To the authentic myth of the front-fighter is added the 'authentic myth of the nation'. The Freikorps fighter experiences his 'loss' of the nation in the betrayal of his cause by the masters he serves. Krenek, the hero of Bronnen's novel, proclaims "I'm not running around here for the state. I'm running around here for Germany."¹⁷ The nation emerges throughout all the contingent circumstances which contradict its essential being as the vision providing the impetus for the activist impulses of the Freikorps fighter. As the front-fighter, now Freikorps fighter, has switched worlds from legitimate total war to quasi-legal guerilla warfare, and from the battlefield to civil society, so Germany, the vision that inspires him, must also become something else. It is no longer a reality which legitimates his actions, but a distant vision which compels him into action.

In Salomon's work, the myth of the nation and the process of transformation underlying it is given its clearest expression. The theoretical centrepiece of Salomon's novel is a discussion between the author and Erwin Kern, a section leader in Organisation Consul, and, if we are to credit Salomon's account, its informal leading theoretician. It was Kern who was primarily responsible for the assassination of

Rathenau, in its planning, its rationale and its execution. Here, in the discussion preceding and accompanying the planning of the assassination, emerges the fact that Rathenau's murder is inseparable from an understanding of Kern's vision of Germany. Generally, the motive for the assassination has been attributed to anti-semitism, and certainly this was a predominant factor in the operations of many right-wing terrorist organisations, including O.C. This is certainly a very strong motive, which Salomon, writing in retrospect, obviously wished to whitewash entirely.¹⁸ Nonetheless, there is little reason to suppose that this invalidates the account of the conversations which took place. On Salomon's reading, Kern emerges as one of the most sophisticated and perverse of the new nationalists, and also one of the most nihilistic. In the book, his heroic stature is more than a token of Salomon's obvious admiration for him. It is also an attempt to portray him as a bodily extension of the authentic myth of the nation he contrives to formulate, a national-revolutionary hero who died in his attempt to resurrect the nation.¹⁹

In Salomon's version of the prologue to the assassination, Kern was not anti-semitic, but nihilistic. Both men read the work of the Jewish statesman avidly and were deeply impressed, especially by his warning of the spread of materialism in a technological age.²⁰ In addition, they both went to hear him address a mass meeting, and realised that their proposed victim was a man of exceptional qualities. Kern called him, in fact, "the finest and ripest fruit of his age." But it is for reasons of his excellence and greatness that Kern wishes to kill him. He resents his claim to greatness in an age by which he, Kern, feels personally betrayed. He says:

"I could not bear it if someone great should emerge from the chaotic and insane age in which we live. Let him pursue what fools call a policy of fulfillment. That's no business

of ours. But I could not tolerate it if this man should once again inspire this nation with a faith: that he should raise it up to a purposefulness and give to it a national consciousness. For these things belong to an age which was destroyed in the war, that is dead, as dead as mutton." 21

Kern's nationalism is a negation of the possibility of faith in the existing nation. It is precisely because Rathenau seems able to achieve what Kern has defined as defunct that his existence and achievement is intolerable. The act of assassination is to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Rathenau's death will ensure that what Kern holds to be impossible will never come true. The nation will retain its purity as a myth, and not be dragged into the amorphous web of reality by any politician interested in national reconstruction. According to Kern, it is only the outlaws themselves who remain in contact with the nation as it really is. It has no other referent in living reality. All other imperfect manifestations of it must be destroyed before they are allowed to take root. For Kern, the nation no longer exists. It can only be reclaimed by those who have rejected the pre-war epoch responsible for its humiliation, and who by the process of war have been changed utterly. It can only be claimed by destruction and revolutionary terror, without consciousness or faith. The war, for Kern, signified the death of the nation and all those who fought for it, both living and dead:

"I asked Kern: 'How is it that you, as an imperial officer, managed to survive the ninth of November, 1918?' Kern replied: 'I did not survive it. As honour demanded, on November ninth, 1918, I blew my brains out. I am dead. What survives is another thing. Since that day, I have lost myself. But I won't be any different from the two millions that died. I died for the nation, and all that survives in me lives only for the nation. Were it otherwise, I could not bear it.'" 22

In declaring a moratorium on the nation, Kern declares war on all those who try and inspire it with a living faith. For such an effort stands as a theoretical affront to his diagnosis of death. Such a faith contradicts his experience as a front-officer transformed into a nihilist by his sense of self-decimation. For how can the nation continue to exist when all its heroes have already died? The Freikorps terrorist becomes, through Kern's words, the humiliated front-fighter seeking revenge for his own death. He seeks to recognise the nation only by making its resurrection synonymous with his own resurrection. There can be nothing else. Schauwecker goes even further, by suggesting that the very process of losing the war was necessary to this ultimate victory of the new nationalism. He makes Allbrecht, the hero of his novel Awakening of the Nation, say, in the very last speech in the book:

"Now we can begin to set free what is buried but what still lives, yes, and that which has the will to live but which is not yet born....We had to lose the war to win the nation."²³

In their desire to radicalise the struggle for national resurrection, the new nationalists come to look upon the Freikorps campaigns as the origins of the national revolution. The assassination of Rathenau, in Salomon's version, is conceived of as a revolutionary act. But its essence is destructive. It is symbolic of the permanent negation of the present implicit in the anarchic nihilism of the Freikorps - a will-to-destroy unaccompanied by a will-to-power. In Kern's vision, the nation is no longer a political concept, but a justification for nihilism, a pretext for revenge against the complacency of a bourgeois society. After the assassination, there was no next step. The killing was greeted by a nation-wide horror and indignation. Kern and

Hermann Fischer, the assassins, had in fact made plans to flee the country after the event. Trapped by police in an isolated castle-tower in the Thuringian mountains, Kern was killed by a bullet, perhaps from his own gun, and Fischer certainly shot himself.²⁴

The process of transformation from mass-slaughter at the front to civil brutality at home and, finally, to secret terror, had a perverse historical logic all of its own. Kern's death was like a voluntary self-execution based on the premise of his existing death. It seemed to typify the death-wish of a movement turning in upon itself.²⁵

Salomon himself insisted that each political assassination severely shook the structure of the new democracy. Assassination, as a political technique, is, however, highly limited unless it is accompanied by other forms of political programme, and these the O.C. certainly did not have. After Rathenau's assassination, the movement began to disintegrate.

At an early stage in a century of extensive political and revolutionary terrorism, the nature and consequence of its activities were not lost on its leading members.²⁶ It was characterised by anonymity, ubiquity, and the effective use of unpredictable terror. Like most organisations based on suspicion and the creation of fear, it spent half its time searching out spies and enemies in its own midst with a sadistic and petty-minded brutality.²⁷ Terrorism stood at the end-process of a period in which a younger generation of German nationalists had established themselves as ruthless practitioners of civil genocide - perhaps on a scale unequalled before the emergence in the thirties of the Stalinist and national-socialist terrors, which had the advantage, so crucial to politicised and systematic efficiency, of total power.

The specific background of the Freikorps is crucial to the

understanding of the myth of the nation as the basis for their nihilism. No other doctrine or ideology could capture the sense of compulsion which they felt to act in a brutal or destructive manner, nor indicate the authentic origin which they felt to underlie this compulsion. No other revolutionary myth could dictate to them the necessity of driving the final nails into the coffin of the Imperial Germany, for which, only years before, they had fought, and for which their fallen comrades had died. The nation as a geo-political unit, a territory subjected to a state, had ceased to exist. It existed in the writings of the new nationalists as an external metaphysical force which controlled their actions. In many instances this compulsion is portrayed as a species of psychobiological reductionism. In this vein, Heinz, for example, writes "The extreme opposite of nationalism is fatalism. The nationalist, knowing nothing in his experience but a sense of overwhelming powers, obeys only the demonic energy of his own blood, and believes that the process of change is the product of actions committed at exactly the right moment."²⁸ Activism in this sense is not a manifestation of free-will, but of biological and psychological compulsion. The nationalist is the activist compelled into activity by external forces which overwhelm him. The 'nation' is a myth which engenders the psychological need to act out of desperation. In the process of radicalisation, the act becomes conceived of as revolutionary, as a prelude to undefined but cataclysmic change in the social order.

Kern stresses the deterministic and metaphysical nature of this compulsion when he tells Salomon that they are an elect chosen to submit to it in the natural course of struggling for the resurrection of the nation:

"If we are chosen, we are chosen in our hearts to preserve what has come down to us through hundreds of years, what has been preserved through every contingent event, what first made us worthy of being a nation. No nation striving for its fullest development refuses to rule as far as its faculties permit. I recognise no submission save to this power....Nothing else is open to me but to act as the whole force of my will orders me to act. This force is destructive. Hence, I destroy."²⁹

The nature of this activism, is in the Durkheimian sense, that of a force external to man which controls his action. It is not, however, social, but metaphysical. It does not produce normative constraints, but instead unleashes action in violation of normative constraints. It is action which knows no submission to socialisation outside the sacred arena of war. Kern thus formulates the embryo of what seems a contradiction in terms, a nihilist metaphysic, which perpetrates itself in the 'myth' of the nation. Amidst the seemingly arbitrary and random destruction of anarchic nihilism lies the source of compulsion which legitimates it. Whereas the myth of the front-fighter is authenticated by the lived experience of the front, the myth of the nation is so vast, so unapproachable, so remote from reality that it ends up with no empirical referent at all. Yet this, without doubt, is the core value of new nationalism. In his sociological essay for the Juenger symposium, Salomon writes:

"The spiritual essence of the Freikorps formed itself in a fluctuating and variable manner around an absolute and recognisable nucleus, around the nation as a central value, as a metaphysical compulsion, whose laws had to dictate their every action."³⁰

The nation, bereft of reality, dictates the actions which are supremely real. Destruction is the supreme reality. For the new nationalists it was a way, to use Juenger's words once again, "to stamp their burning seal in the flowing wax of the world." In a certain sense,

such a nationalism must become religious or even divine to compensate for the grotesquely mundane atrocities which are committed in its name. Schauwecker ultimately claims that the nation is God. "If the nation is without beginning and without end," he writes, "if it is one in origin and in purpose, then the nation is God and God is the nation. Then Germanness is a religion. Then the German is ultimately a believer."³¹ It is the be-all and the end-all of action, and action is, in Kern's words, destructive. The nation is a God of war, a reality transformed into a metaphysic in the interests of maintaining through anarchic nihilism a fundamental contact with a reality it has lost. The contradictions this creates at a theoretical level are the ones which Juenger attempts to resolve in his essay on "Total Mobilisation", in which he sets up his blueprint for the systematisation of nihilism. As it was, the "myth of the nation" initially embellished Juenger's myth of the front-fighter, and his sociological model of nihilistic, unpolitical man.

The fact that the memoirs of the Freikorps campaigns, as with the memoirs of the war-experience, came to be published at the beginning of the thirties, re-emphasises the importance of historical retrospection. The precedent for the national-socialist terror had already been created, anarchic and unsystematic as it was. What was more important was the upsurge of intellectual activity which came to demonstrate that such horror and atrocity was not unamenable to intellectual rationalisation. The brutality of the Freikorps, the outlaws which Salomon characterised as being, in all cultural and sociological senses, as freischwebend, free of all normative constraints in civil society, are portrayed as the logico-historical consequence of the suffering and betrayal of the front-fighter in the Great War. This judgment was historical.³²

The source of its legitimation lay in the fact that those who retrospectively made the judgment were also those at the centre of the events on which they passed judgment. A justification of human brutality had been given the seal of authentic myth.

The radicalisation of German nationalism centred around the emergent conception of the nation as a myth. It was a form of what Charles Maurras, the leader of Action Francaise,³³ had called "integral nationalism", a total and unconditional commitment to the nation as an interest above all other interests. The specific mythology, in addition, ensured the solidarity of the committed group. The nation was the externalised metaphysical compulsion which governed all actions. According to the new nationalists, the historical circumstances of post-war Germany demanded that these actions should be destructive in content. The religion of nationalism,³⁴ with its nation-God, dictated the necessity of destroying all existing forms of social and political order. Yet destruction was a necessary form of resurrection. Schauwecker had proclaimed "we had to lose the war to win the nation". Juenger, in his book The Adventurous Heart, went a stage further and regarded a certain form of destructiveness as necessary to the process of historical renewal. He called this form "Prussian anarchy". The paradox in the phrase is the one we have already discussed, the contrast between brutal anarchy and military discipline, the two faces of the front-fighter and the Freikorps ethos. Nihilism was the mode of destroying the old order to usher in the new, by the use of military means. Juenger conceived of action attuned to this transformation in terms of his conception of adventure.

He speaks of "the most strange and sublime appearance of the Prussian anarchist which only becomes possible in an age when all order has come to grief. He alone is equipped, and accountable through the categorical imperative of his own heart, for passing on through the chaos of violence to the foundation of a new order." ³⁵

In the writings of the new nationalists, the source of this "categorical imperative" of the adventurous heart is the nation itself. The fact, however, that such action implied widespread social and historical consequences involved, at least for Juenger, a much wider appraisal of human behaviour than such a narrow concept of nationalism could give. The role of Spengler and Moeller van der Bruck was to provide crucial theoretical guide-lines for the historical significance of post-war nationalist action, in which nationalism could be seen to have a wider sociological context. The first major breakthrough they had created was in their condemnation of the 1918 revolution as an "insurrection" or as "ineffectual revolution", criticisms which provided fuel for the nationalist belief that they themselves were the revolutionaries, even though they had fought against the people behind the barricades. In historical retrospect, national-revolution can be seen as a historical strategy arising out of its original role of counter-revolution. The putschist mentality which Moeller attributed to the Freikorps, and which he condemned so vigourously, now itself becomes justified as an embryonic form of revolutionary action against the democratic republic. Salomon, who admitted the political naivety of the Freikorps, could nevertheless condemn the leftists of 1918 as "a grey rabble without instinct for blood or barricades." ³⁶ Schauwecker makes the homecoming officer-narrator of The Fiery Way say of the revolutionary scenes confronting his decimated company, "I've nothing against the revolution. We saw

it coming inevitably, but when I see this shuffling without trace of genius, this thrusting of utter incompetence into the offices of the state, the contents of my gorge shoot up."³⁷

The ineffectuality and the inevitability of the revolution had, in reality, not been foregone conclusions. The homecoming nationalists from the front were both startled and enraged by the widespread civil disorders. They saw them as the initial manifestation of the stab-in-the-back and the betrayal of Germany, later given an official seal of approval by the Treaty of Versailles. The role of the Freikorps was crucial in quelling the leftist revolt and setting up the republic. In retrospect, however, the work of Moeller and Spengler could be adduced as theoretical 'evidence' of the historical necessity of the failure of the Left. The Left had been discredited, according to the elder statesmen, because it operated with a false and bastardised form of socialism. The specific terms of its nibilation lay, as we have seen, in uncovering the 'true' yet dormant forms of German socialism which lay waiting in the wings upon the failure of the Left. Spengler and Moeller were the first to say "I told you so", about an issue which had hung in the historical balance.

The new nationalists celebrated their graduation from the status of counter-revolutionaries to national-revolutionaries with smatterings of the nationalist socialism offered to them by the elder statesmen. Kern, for example, talking vaguely of a socialistic and nationalistic Germany, echoes Spengler's demand for a socialisation and equalisation of wealth and a return to the intellectual unity of the Second Reich.³⁸

Salomon himself, in his sociological essay, repeats Spengler's assertion that Marxism was a political ideology which established itself in the context of a purely nineteenth century capitalist society.³⁹ Its class doctrine, therefore, could be seen as little more than part of the ideological superstructure of the subordinate class of capitalist society, which would dissolve and crumble in the new nationalist and socialist Germany. Here, according to Salomon, the true socialist emerges, dispensing with all the intellectual trappings of "ideologies, dogmas and programmes", for programmes, as Spengler had said, belonged to the previous century. If nationalism was a metaphysical compulsion, socialism was a "wordless consciousness". It was a matter of feeling, not of rational intellect. The new nationalists clearly saw themselves in the notion of Gemeinschaft, which Spengler called socialism of the blood, and which he explicitly stated originated from the war-experience.

Nationalism was the impulse to destroy, socialism the feeling of social solidarity which suffused the bands of nationalist destroyers. Both erected an externalised doctrinal metaphysic. Both were a species of psychological reductionism. In both their metaphysical and their reductionist phases they complemented one another. Nationalism and socialism formed an emotive yet metaphysical unity. Kern, while talking in terms of the egalitarian and socialistic unity of the nation, can say, almost in the same breath, that he is not interested in the nation's hunger, but in its fate. To these obsessions, the conservatism of Moeller van der Bruck seemed almost peripheral. It was true that in the Freikorps movement historical symbols of Germany gained a new importance. In the Baltic, the Hamburg

Freikorps flew the ancient Hansa flag and sang old songs.

In Organisation Consul the medieval practice of Femegericht (Folk Justice), originally used by vigilante bands to dispense home-made justice, with its gruesome single sentence of death for any offence, was revived with a conscious and symbolic recognition of its historical origins. More important than Germany's past, however, was Moeller's futuristic vision of Germany as a great empire.

When Salomon asked Kern the ultimate goal of the actions impelled by his enslavement to the nation, he replied "In the conquest of the world by Germany".⁴⁰ Revolutionary nationalism in a state already possessing national sovereignty invariably gravitated towards imperial domination. The goals of revolutionary nationalism, already confronted with the actual existence of the nation-state, were ultimately bound by their own logic to affirm the pursuit of imperial conquest. Moeller had staked his claim to posterity by proclaiming the future utopian vision of empire when the majority of the right-wing rebels were still narrowly nationalistic and nihilistic. In this way, it provided a political foundation for the direction of revolutionary nationalism simultaneously with the projection of its grandiose utopian design of the future Germany. It was no exaggeration to say that Moeller's prime contribution to the ideology of revolutionary-nationalism was to legitimise the ambivalent and contradictory conception of Germany as both empire and nation.

Apart from taking the notions of socialism and revolution out of the hands of the unsuccessful revolutionaries, Spengler and Moeller

also found evidence in Russia of the successful development of the struggle against that other main enemy of the radical right - Western liberalism. They both looked, in different ways, to Russia as the major post-war source of resistance to the Westernising trends in Europe and the hegemony of political democracy. Their claim to have detected in the new Soviet Republics a great upsurge of nationalist feeling, both during and after the revolution, was not lost on the new nationalists. According to Salomon, the greatest political error of the Freikorps, after having allowed themselves to be used for the defence of the German bourgeoisie against the red terror, was to become the instrument of Allied foreign policy against the Red Army in the Baltic.⁴¹ Kern, in Salomon's novel, speaks of the Bolshevik seizure of power as part of a process of national awakening that ought to be emulated in Germany without all the superficial trappings of Marxism.⁴² Schauwecker claimed that Lenin was a "great leader" who died before he was able to prevent the nationalist impetus of bolshevism from being submerged in the Trotskyist ideology of international communism.⁴³ Dwinger compared the conflict between Kerenski's liberalism and Bolshevism with the parallel antipathy between German Wilhelmianism and the ethos of the Front. He asserted that German nationalism, inspired by the nationalist upsurge of the Bolsheviks, would not submit itself in the docile manner of the German communist party to the Soviet world-revolutionary claims, but set up instead a parallel and rival nationalism with similar revolutionary foundations. "The destiny of Germany", he wrote, "is not East or West, but an autonomous centre where the German world-revolution will assert itself against the Russian world-revolution."⁴⁴

Russian bolshevism, distinguished from the international and purely class-connnotations of Marxism, was seized upon as a historical precedent for the fusion of nationalism and socialism advocated by the revolutionary-nationalists. Towards the end of the Republic, it led to the emergence of the National-Bolshevik movement of Ernst Niekisch which became one of the main national-revolutionary factions.

What is notable about Salomon's writings is that they convey much of the general emotive character of Freikorps nationalism. The "nation" is erected into a metaphysic without substance. Yet all forms of integral nationalism thrive on such a diffuse emotional support. Hitler exploited it to the full in his constant railing against the 'Diktat' of Versailles. In the German situation, his success was in no way dependent purely on people's concrete ideas of what Germany was or ought to be. But for nationalist intellectuals, such could not be the case. They had to state what the nation was and to chart its destiny. In doing so, most of them displayed utter contempt for the liberal nineteenth century conception of nationality and the nation-state. Bismarck's legacy was obvious. He had not created a nation but a Reich, an empire by military and expansionist means. Yet even this was not enough. Bismarck had co-existed with the liberal nations of the West and consequently never made full use of Germany's dynamic expansionist potential. While many writers, including Hitler himself, saw this expansion in terms of racial mastery, the lesson of the Great War had been very much different for Juenger. He saw the key to military-imperial expansion in technology. The war of material made few concessions to recognised territorial boundaries. The re-drawing of the map of central Europe by the victorious Allied Powers had made this very clear. The idea of the German nation with a fixed territorial area pillaged by the

Treaty of Versailles was a predominant factor in the resentment of the more conservative nationalists, but for most revolutionary-nationalists this was a thing of the past. Juenger's idea of technology provided a cogent rationale for a new imperialism in which the nation was to be constrained no more by the formula of the nation-state or the idea of nationality. Juenger came to envisage his new Germany as a technological world-empire.

The impact of technology on warfare is crucial to Juenger's mythology of the front-fighter. In a repressive technological world the latter serves as an alternative hero and victim to that of Marx's industrial proletarian. In the face of imminent destruction he is the most exploited and the most courageous of men. The front-intellectual provided for Germany's nationalist storm-troopers and freebooters an alternative mythology to that of Marxism. The mythology was in many ways however even more limited and unconvincing. For the fighter was ephemeral. The industrial worker was a permanent feature of the modern world; the fighter in a mass army at best a temporary one. The problem then for Juenger was to make the fighter the prototype of the new man in a world which in peacetime renounced his existence. There was only one solution. In order for the front-fighter to gain the universal status of the worker, war would have to become permanent. If war was permanent the enslavement of the iron cage, to use Weber's metaphor, would have to be accepted^d as necessary and desirable. The universal nature of the fighter, consequently to become the fighter-worker, could only be sought in that universal process of rationalisation which Weber had seen as intrinsic to all societies whether socialist or capitalist. But where Weber resisted his own

prophecy, even to the extent of opting for the limited freedom of 'private capitalist expansion' against 'governmental direction' based on German civil service officialdom, Juenger acclaimed this process. For Weber it held out the prospect of a universal bureaucracy based upon uniform conditions of organisational rationality. For Juenger on the other hand, under the conditions of permanent and total war, organisational rationality was militaristic rather than bureaucratic. It was oriented towards planned methodical destruction. As such, it held out within the iron cage the perpetual thrust of danger and adventure which bureaucracy in the Weberian formula could never possess. Whereas Weber saw the bureaucratisation of the modern mass army as a feature of a modern growth of organisational rationality, Juenger saw the mass army as the core model of all other organisations. For Weber the modern army was potentially bureaucratic; for Juenger the modern organisation was potentially militaristic. Juenger's perversion of Weber's formula of rationalisation finally enabled him in Der Arbeiter to present an alternative prototypical worker to that of Marx. But he achieved it, by the denial, typical of both the Nazis and the Bolsheviki under Stalin, of the role of the worker in the emancipation of humanity. Like Marx's proletarian, Juenger's fighter is the product of a total environment. Unlike Marx, however, Juenger conceives of no change in the fighter thereafter, whatever the changes in environment. Socialised into war, he is not pacified by peace. His fighting attributes, his stoicism, his capacity to receive and inflict pain, are permanently enduring come what may. There is no question of emancipating himself (or humanity) from bondage, for that bondage is inevitable.

The great war and the civil war were two historical events which provided the focal point for changes at all levels of German society. One of these changes might be termed a change in generational ideologies in some sections of the German middle-class. Many middle-class Germans of the generation of recruiting age for the war came to commit themselves to extremist political doctrines after the collapse of Imperial Germany. On the political right, a developmental process occurred whereby a highly revolutionary nationalism came to challenge the previous dominant ideology of conservative nationalism which had acquired widespread legitimacy in pre-war German society. The social basis of this extremism lay in the disaffected junior officer stratum, which was both unable and unwilling to secure military positions for itself in the drastically reduced officer corps of the post-war German army. The "war-experience" of this group of officers, and sometimes N.C.O.s as well, was a necessary condition for this disaffection with Wilhelminian Germany and the type of nationalism which had prevailed in it. The "war-experience" became totalised by many new nationalist writers who emerged from this stratum, to epitomise man's experience of war as such, and, in so doing, elevated the "war-experience" to the status of an authentic myth. The process of alternation conveyed by Juenger and Schauwecker found its social basis of continuity in the post-war campaigns of the Freikorps. The legitimacy of the new ideological conception of war and of nationalism was reinforced by the post-war activity of the socio-military stratum to whom it referred.

Such a change in generational ideologies rested also upon the de-institutionalisation of this group. Their ability to carry out military practices within the context of volunteer formations and outside of the legitimate institutional context of violence - the armed forces -

provided the social basis for the nihilistic conceptions which became prevalent in the radicalisation of nationalist ideologies among the new nationalist writers of the younger generation. This whole historical syndrome comes under the heading of what Mannheim was to call "the generational stratification of experience."⁴⁵ Differential age accessibility to major historical events within such an institutional context suggests that given generational units have differential responses, in many cases, to questions of socio-political legitimacy. Within the sociology of radical politics, one of the most distinctive forms of generational discontinuity has arisen out of mass participation in collective violence, whether in the form of rebellion, revolution or war.⁴⁶ In the present case, the differential access to a specific type of violence became the necessary condition for the process of activist radicalisation, which was only, six or so years later, to become fully politicised, with the growth of national-revolutionary circles and of the mass political movement of national-socialism.

Within this generational context, the social solidarity underlying ideological change was also a function of differential age accessibility and the front-line conditions which resulted from them, accentuated the favourability of this formation of solidarity. The adulation of the comradely Gemeinschaft of the trenches implicitly referred to the highly intensified form under which solidarity experiences are, as Eisenstadt has suggested,⁴⁷ developed within the context of secondary socialisation. At the same time, the authentic myth of the young nationalists specified a further source of disenchantment with the superficial and patriotic glorification of war by the politicians, the professors and the pamphleteers of

1914. The war, for the younger nationalist generation, was a living reality which falsified and discredited the "ideas of 1914". The actual letters of German student war victims do give some evidence of the disenchantment with idealistic patriotism. It is only in the post-war writings of Juenger, Schauwecker and their followers, however, that this disenchantment is turned into a sociocultural critique of the whole political background to the war, and further into a projection of the alternation process of war. These three thematic nuclei, Gemeinschaft, disenchantment and alternation constitute the basis of the generational change in nationalist ideology.

Initially, the new nationalist ideology of the post-war generation possessed only the first of the two doctrinal indices of nihilation. It had rejected idealistic patriotism and the social strata which propagated this notion without explaining the development of the phenomenon of conservative nationalism as a dominant ideology, within the framework of its own substituted doctrines of nationalism. This did not, in fact, occur until the intellectual activity of a relatively small group of thinkers bore fruit at the turn of the decade. The work of Spengler and Moeller van der Bruck had certainly tended in this direction, but their immediate criticisms tended, for the most part, to revolve around the nihilation and incorporation of left-wing socialism into the aegis of neo-conservative ideology. While Moeller deplored the restorationist tendencies of the German Nationalist Party as being reactionary, he did not attempt to explain the phenomenon of pre-war nationalism from the standpoint of his own theory. It was not until Carl Schmitt's Der Begriff Des Politischen and Juenger's symposium on war that the full nihilation of conservative nationalism in this sense occurred.

Its occurrence is inseparable, also, from the actual fate of conservative nationalism after the collapse of Imperial Germany. The attachment of the orthodox academic intelligentsia to the state, referred to earlier, became under the condition of the Weimar Constitution, where the conservative nationalists became a minority political party, much less plausible. The collapse of the cultural values which underpinned the "ideas of 1914" in fact made the professorial class intellectually bankrupt. The intellectual bankruptcy, apart from being a contributory factor to the more radical notions of nationalism which circulated after the war, also led to a debate about the nature of knowledge in general. The debacle of German collapse had lent substance to Nietzsche's prophecy of the disintegration of values and to the credibility of Spengler's grandiose historical scheme of self-closed relativistic cultures. These Nietzschean and Spenglerian components are also present in the debate centring around the sociology of knowledge. And the sociology of knowledge in turn led to the circulation of makeshift ideas in German social theory which lent support to the growth of revolutionary-nationalism. In the work of Hans Freyer and the Tat-circle of Hans Zehrer it came to possess a distinctly political and polemical aspect. It is to this aspect which, by way of excursus, we must now turn.

NOTESCHAPTER IV

1. See R. Waite, Vanguard of Nazism, pp 45-48, and Ernst von Salomon, "Der verlorene Hause" in Krieg und Krieger, p.120.

As for the constitution of the Reichswehr, its officer class had a numerus clausus of 4000 imposed by the Versailles Treaty. According to Demeter, about half of these were sons of former German officers, and there is little evidence of the presence of young war-commissioned officers in any large number. Demeter, op.cit. p.54.
2. Bernard Oudin, Les Corps universitaires des Etudiants Allemandes, pp. 138-9.
3. Hans Bleuel and Ernst Klinnert, Deutsche Studenten auf den Weg in Dritte Reich, p.71
4. Waite, op.cit, pp. 208-210.
5. See Howard Becker, German Youth, pp. 109-141, and Walter Laqueur, Young Germany, pp. 121-129, on the process of sectarianism and the internecine strife of the post-war Youth Movement.
6. Mohler, op.cit. pp. 54-55.
7. Thomas Mann, "The German Republic" in Order of the Day. In dialogue with the students who opposed him, Mann said "War is romantic.... but to-day only the insensible would deny that it is an utterly debased romanticism, an utter distortion of the poetic.... War is a lie, its issues are a lie; whatever honourable emotion that the individual may bring to it, war itself today is stripped of all honour, and to any clear and straight-eyed vision reveals itself as the triumph of all that is brutal and vulgar in the soul of the race, as the arch-foe of culture and thought". p.9 Mann challenges his restive young audience. "Confess that this is the truth", which they, naturally, refuse to do. Mann's defence of the Republic and non-violence in general was not lost on the national-revolutionaries. Ernst von Salomon was later on to see in a vision of an eternal Germany a right to claim for the Reich its kindred spirits, such as Dante and Shakespeare, and in return throw Thomas Mann over to the West. See Die Stadt, p.303.
8. Fritz K. Ringer, op.cit.p.216.

9. The bulk of new-nationalist literature arose during the period of controversy about the war-experience after the publication of Remarque's novel, All Quiet on the Western Front, in 1928. Apart from Juenger and Schauwecker, the most important works are Salomon's The Outlaws, published in 1929; Heinz's Sprengstoff, published in 1930, and Die Nation Greift an (The Nation Attacks) in 1932; Arnolt Bronnen's novel, O.S., (1929); Beumelburg's novel, Gruppe Bosmueller (1930); and Dwinger's novel, Wir Rufen Deutschland (1932).
10. Apart from Salomon's leader, Hermann Ehrhardt, Ernst Roehm, Manfred Killinger, and Gerhard Rossbach, all of whom were to join Hitler's S.A., wrote of their experiences, often with the aid of ghost writers. Their efforts, compared with that of Salomon, show the fluctuating standards of literacy in what Mohler called "the literature of the unliterary". Mohler, *op.cit.*, p.47.
11. The term is used by Gordon Allport in Personality to refer to motives which have arisen in pursuit of specific goals but which continue to operate, although that goal no longer exists. On the nature of the continual search for enemies, the most far-reaching sociological insights are to be found in Georg Simmel's essay, Conflict, pp. 97-98. See also Lewis Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict, pp 104-119.
12. F. W. Heinz, Sprengstoff, p.7
13. Salomon, "Der verlorene Hause", *op.cit.*, p.109. It is interesting to note that, while Heinz was an active infantry lieutenant on the Western Front at the age of eighteen, and experienced the homecoming of which he speaks, Salomon, several years younger, was still a military cadet when the war ended and furious at being robbed of a chance to fight in the war. Nonetheless, he describes his conversion to the Freikorps cause as being the result of being overwhelmed by the awesome sight of a homecoming battalion marching through his home town and exhibiting its implacable "face of iron". Salomon, Die Geachteten, pp 24-28.
14. Salomon, *op.cit.*, p.97.
15. At one point in The Outlaws, just after the Kapp Putsch, a senior officer declares to Salomon, "We must put a stop to the revolution", to which he replies, "We must carry on the revolution!", *ibid.* p.145.
16. Arnolt Bronnen, O.S., p.269.
17. *ibid.*, p.270.

18. Salomon reports in his post-World War II memoirs that at the time of the publication of his novel, no-one believed his suggestion that anti-semitism was irrelevant to the motives of the assassins. Even Juenger is reported to have asked "Why didn't you admit you were anti-semitic?", see The Answers, p.264. In 1933, Ernst-Werner Techow, in his account of the assassination, confirmed the anti-semitic motive; see Gemeiner Moerder Das Rathenau-Attentat (Leipzig 1933).
19. Salomon regarded him as a person of exceptional qualities. He wrote, "Nothing gave him greater elan than the premonition of his own death", Salomon, op.cit. p.264.
20. Rathenau deals with this problem in particular in a book he wrote before the outbreak of the war, and which was published in 1913, Zur Mechanik Des Geistes.
21. Salomon, op.cit., p.264.
22. Salomon, op.cit., p.269.
23. Schauwecker, Aufbruch der Nation, p.403
24. Accounts of the event differ. Salomon claims that Kern was shot by a police bullet, as does Heinz. Count Harry Kessler, in his biography of Rathenau, claims that Kern shot himself. Fischer shot himself immediately afterwards.
25. The death-sick claustrophobia of the movement at this point in time is well captured by Richard Hughes in his novel The Fox in the Attic. Hughes, obviously impressed by Salomon's novel includes references to Rathenau's assassination and its aftermath. Wolff, the fanatic nationalist villain/hero in the third section of the novel, is seeking refuge in the attic of a young comrade's family house near Munich. After the fiasco of Hitler's Munich putsch, Franz, the son who is hiding him, tries to persuade him to take over the leadership of the right-wing activists. Wolff, having turned insane in his confinement, laughs at him, and in a horrifying scene near the end of the book, is discovered in the attic by Franz's blind sister, Mitzi, hanging from a beam, dead by his own hand. The biography of Wolff has some similarities with that of Salomon, though obviously the author was not making an explicit analogy. For his part in the assassination conspiracy, Salomon did not, of course, escape, and was jailed for five years.
26. Much of the dialogue between Kern and Salomon was spent in analysing the nature of terrorism. According to Kern, the reputation and effectiveness of O.C. was increased by the fact that people, confronted by an unknown terror, have the need to label it as a work of conspirators. Conspiracy theories about terrorism merely accentuates the feeling of terror and extends people's mistrust of everybody. Mistrust becomes a camouflage for the real terrorist. "The power of suggestion is enormous", Kern says, "it creates the veil behind which people like ourselves can work comfortably". For the O.C. terrorism, as well as being a form of personal revenge against despised Republican politicians, became something of an end in itself, as war was for Juenger, rather

than as an instrument of political purposes. Heinz, commenting ironically on Kern's remark, says "The confusing of emotions seems to be the most effective weapon of O.C.", Salomon, op.cit., pp.229-233. Mohler, op.cit., p.143.

27. As, for example, with the beating of Wagner, which Salomon describes in all its sadistic and gory detail.
28. F. W. Heinz, Die Nation greift an, p.70
29. Salomon, op.cit., p.265.
30. Salomon, "Der verlorene Hause", p.111.
31. F. Schauwecker, Deutsche Allein, p.138.
32. Salomon, for example, started to write his novel, The Outlaws, in prison after his conviction for his role in the Rathenau affair. It was published in 1929, soon after he had been set free.
33. Maurras originally coined the term at the height of the Dreyfus affair to describe the particular type of nationalism which his own movement espoused. He said "an integral nationalist places his country above everything; he, therefore, conceives, treats, resolves all questions in relation to the national interest."
34. Some writers have argued, in fact, that the personification and deification of the Fatherland is a feature of all nationalism, which is, therefore, in essence a religious phenomenon. See especially Carlton Hayes, Nationalism; A religion, chap. XII In the case of "integral nationalism", however, there seems to be the crucial distinction that the nation is not seen to embody any substantive values at all. It becomes a law unto itself.
35. E. Juenger, Das abenteuerliche Herz, Berlin, 1929, cited in Mohler, op.cit., p.143.
36. Salomon, op.cit., p.16.
37. Schauwecker, op.cit., p.244.
38. He speaks of a "socialisation of everything by means of which not only would economic tyranny be destroyed through a form of collectivisation which gave every last penny to each member of the nation, but also of a process of socialisation which would restore that unity which was stolen in the nineteenth century." Salomon, op.cit., p.269.
39. "Der verlorene Hause", op.cit., p.114ff.

40. Salomon, op.cit., p.267
41. Salomon, op.cit., p.98. The German commander-in-chief in the Baltic was forced to sign an agreement in July 1919 to withdraw the Freikorps from the area, after a prior agreement between the Latvians and the Allies. Some of the Freikorps mutinied against the order, and continued fighting right up to the end of 1919, when they were finally routed.
42. *ibid*, p.189
43. F. Schauwecker, So ist der Friede, p.8
44. Dwinger, op.cit., p.547. Dwinger speaks of a nationalist socialism which would unite the war-experience of the Germans with the revolutionary experience of the Russians. "The sythesis of the war-experience of the Whites and the revolutionary experience of the Reds - that is the legacy of our death, our cry for a new Germany!", *ibid*. p.546.
45. Karl Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations", in Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge, p.296 ff.
46. A similar example of this, in a different political context, can be seen in Maurice Zeitlin, "Political Generations in the Cuban Working Class", American Journal of Sociology, vol.31 1966, pp 493-508. Zeitlin claims that, differentiated by age, the highest degree of support within the Cuban working class for the 1959 revolution was from the '53 generation, i.e. those who were between the ages of 18 and 25 at the time of the 1953 rebellion. In this instance, previous generational experience of rebellion engendered generational continuity, since the similarity of the political leaders in both cases, Castro, Guevara, etc., made the workers of this age group favourable towards the 26th July Movement. Zeitlin's choice of 18-25 as the age catchment for the generational experience of political events would correspond quite remarkably to the average age range of the ex-front officer Freikorps and also to the younger students, like Salomon, who joined the Freikorps after being "robbed" of the war.
47. See S. N. Eisenstadt, From Generation to Generation. Eisenstadt points out this aspect of secondary socialisation in specifying the process of transition from kinship units to wider social groups among youth in general. Thus he states that youths "develop a need to establish or join, primary solidary groups.... which are partly defence against their future roles and partly oriented towards them. The groups most suited to this purpose are age-homogenous groups, in which the human image of a given age grade becomes an important symbol of collective identification", p.50. The Freikorps maintain their primary solidary groups in defiance and contempt of the future roles that civil society has to offer them, after the institutional context has been officially dissolved.

CHAPTER V

The Sociology of Knowledge and the Dethronement of the Ideocracy

The destruction of the German monarchy and Second Reich heralded a crisis in German politics. The final and sudden collapse of the German war-effort had utterly discredited the professorial euphoria of the "ideas of 1914." In its place there prevailed a universal war-weariness and disintegration of national morale which gradually undermined the confidence and privilege of the pre-war defenders of Kultur. The war was the point of fatal acceleration in what Fritz Ringer has recently called "The decline of the German Mandarins". In many ways the same high standards of learning in German universities which were the envy of Europe remained. But the status and political role of the orthodox mandarin was severely undermined. The threat of a volatile political democracy and a philistine mass-culture reared its ugly head. Ernst Troeltsch wrote in his Spektator Briefe:

"The academic class has become more and more conservative monarchistic and nationalistic.... Patriotic indignation at the fate of Germany is one reason. The other is the class war against the proletarianisation of society, against the threat of educational reforms which would destroy higher cultivation, and eliminate the academic status-groups."¹

The success of Spengler's Decline seemed to symbolise its dilemma. A work of immense historical scholarship had reached a huge reading public. But it was written by an outsider, a dilettante whose understanding of history was judged faulty by the orthodox, and whose appeal was not due to scholarly achievement but to its appearance of lending historical weight to a widespread popular feeling of cultural despair.

The sovereignty of Kultur and the realm of absolute ideas seemed to have been challenged less by subversive iconoclasts than by a series of historical events which seemed to defy description. Even the cry of revolution itself seemed submerged in an irreversible state of Heraclitean flux. The history of Germany's debacle seemed to defy interpretation. In literature Hermann Broch, Franz Kafka and Robert Musil all prophesied the growing helplessness of the intellect on the stage of European culture. Musil in his novel The Man without Qualities (Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften) written in 1930 about a "collateral campaign" of aristocrats and intellectuals in pre-war Vienna, looks forward at one point to the historical fate which awaited all his well-intentioned but ineffective characters. It was a fate they would never have believed possible:

"In the cinema and at the theatre, on the dance floor and at concerts, in cars and aeroplanes, sun and rain, tailor's workshops and commercial offices a tremendous surface of impressions and expressions, gestures, attitudes and experiences was constantly coming into existence.... And if Arnheim had been able to see several years into the future, he would have witnessed there and then that nineteen hundred and twenty years of Christian morality, an appalling war with its millions of dead and a whole forest of German poetry that had cast its shade over the female sense of modesty, were unable to deter for a single hour the day when women's skirts and hair began to get shorter and the girls of Europe, after countless centuries of taboos, slipped out of their coverings for a while, naked like peeled bananas. There were other changes too, which, had he seen them, he would scarcely have believed possible. And it does not matter how much of it will last and how much of it will disappear again. What must be realised is the great and probably fruitless exertions necessary to bring about such revolutions in life-style along the road of intellectual development.... through philosophers, painters, and poets instead of through tailors, fashion and chance. From this it is possible to speculate how much creative energy is generated from the surface of things, and how sterile, in contrast, are the active qualities of the brain.

"This is the dethronement of the ideocracy, of the brain, and of the shifting of the mind to the periphery...." 2

In academic circles one topic of discussion symptomatic of the dethronement of the ideocracy was the problem of historicism. A debate

which had been sparked off several decades earlier by Wilhelm Dilthey now seemed to have reached an impasse in the relativistic atmosphere of the Weimar Republic. Ernst Troeltsch who pondered the problems of historicism as seriously as anyone, took the idea of history to its most extreme possible point. If, as he claimed, every historical epoch was unique and developed according to its own organic laws,³ it seemed impossible not only to have general theories of history, but also any valid objective criteria for comprehending individual historical totalities. The cul-de-sac of historicism seemed to lie in its degeneration into a radical solipsism and a radical relativism. It seemed to consciously present itself as a symptom of a general disease of intellectual powerlessness. Nothing could be grasped in terms of its intrinsic historical meaning. Nothing could be linked to anything else. Historicism symbolised not only the dethronement of the ideocracy but the dethronement of absolute ideas. For many young German intellectuals and artists, modern reality had evaded the intellect, and traditional and archaic conceptions of knowledge persisted in a vacuum of sterility and self-delusion. The extreme subjectivist spirit of German expressionism had thrived on the disintegration of absolutes. In the Germany of the early twenties, both inside and outside the Youth Movement, mystic, occult and irrationalist sects began to flourish.⁴ Historicism for its part captured the sense and feeling of historical flux and uncertainty without being able to explain it. It had revealed the shortcomings of orthodox scholarship but put nothing in its place.

The crisis of historicism in turn produced its own intellectual response - the sociology of knowledge. Although the term was first used by the vitalist Catholic philosopher and sociologist Max Scheler, it is most closely associated with the name of a young Hungarian sociologist Karl Mannheim, who came to Germany after the defeat of the Hungarian

revolution. Mannheim regarded the sociology of knowledge as an attempt to go beyond historicism by using some method of radical scepticism in order to reinstate the active comprehension of reality which seemed to elude it.⁵ His own writings must be placed in perspective however by a third and relatively obscure figure whom he knew briefly in the early twenties at Heidelberg - a young student of psychology and sociology by the name of Alfred Seidel. Seidel, a member of Hans Bleuher's Freideutsche Jugendbewegung during the war, and subsequently a student of Max Weber and Alfred Weber, is of limited importance as an intellectual influence. On this account, his slim posthumous collection of writings was of negligible consequence. He was important however as an intellectual who on the one hand felt himself part of the malaise stemming from the dethronement of the ideocracy and who, on the other attempted a radical and ultimately nihilistic solution. A supporter of the 1918 revolution and a disciple of Nietzsche and Freud as well, Seidel produced among his random reflections a neo-Freudian theory of revolutionary class-struggle as a form of parricide. Revolution, he claimed, was a manifestation of the oedipus complex involving the hatred of the bourgeois communist son for his capitalist father. This synthesising eclecticism was typical of Seidel's approach. In the course of his book, Consciousness as doom⁶ (Bewusstsein als Verhaengnis), he boldly tried - and failed - to synthesise the Marxian, Freudian, Nietzschean and Weberian critiques of bourgeois society. Seidel wanted to show that the class contradictions of bourgeois society manifested themselves in the growth of cultural decadence, the hypertrophy of the will-to-power, as according to Nietzsche, and also in the growing rationalisation and bureaucratisation of the scientific and organisational world as according to Max Weber. Freud's concept of neurosis he saw complementing Nietzsche's attack on the decadence-sickness

of Christianity. The growing rationalistic and technical discussion of modern social reality which Weber despairingly alluded to, he saw as a Freudian "sublimation" of reality through the artificial and inadequate concepts of science and objectivity. All contributed to what Seidel considered to be the fundamental ill of the bourgeois society of his day - the avoidance of subjective reality through the resort to scientific notions of truth.

Seidel's affirmation of an extreme Nietzschean subjectivism was part of his revolt against the fossilisation of absolute ideas. He was in revolt, however, against two contradictory processes - against the chaos of cultural fragmentation and the purely technical order of an excessive intellectualism. Weber's doctrine of rationalisation and the warning of "the radical disenchantment of the world" were the danger signals for the irreversible trend towards greater intellectual uniformity. The "analytical character" of science, moreover, and its concern with the purely technical dissection of reality, was a form of "sublimated suicide". For illusion, according to Seidel, was closer to reality than truth. 'Reality' may have been an illusion but truth was a sadistic lie:

"The fact that those capable of life can only possess illusory images of the world, means that whoever destroys these illusions is a sadist of truth, himself incapable of life, a suicidal type, instinctiveless, a psychopath in the most evil sense." 7

Seidel saw the scientist as "a sublimating pervert" whose life was characterised by his "anti-social" sublimated intellectual activity. His revolt against rationalisation was based on a perceived incongruence between the claims of science and the nature of life. It was a revolt against a technicised and positivistic image of order. But that same revolt was itself a factor in the disintegration of culture. Its direct

affirmation of life brought to an end the reign of absolute ideas in the realm of European culture:

"The dethronement of absolute ideas through the affirmation of reality - whether it is called life, power or sexuality on the one hand or nation and class on the other - is indicative of the disintegration of culture." 8

Seidel's revolt against order was equally a revolt against chaos. Following Nietzsche, he regarded the twentieth century as the century of nihilism, the era of the denial of life. His attack on rationalisation-as-order and rationalisation-as-disintegration was in his own words an attempt at "the nihilation of nihilism". In particular he attacked the Reflexionscomplex of the modern thinker, the tendency to analytically dissect ideas for purposes of criticism and comparison. This form of reflexive consciousness is suicidal precisely because it leads to fragmentation. Ideology which relies on contrast between conceptual opposites is, according to Seidel, a form of self-denial. Rationalisation and reflexive consciousness embody both order and contrast as nihilistic principles and foment the "destructive intellectuality" of "consciousness as doom". Seidel thus reaches the point where his own nihilation of nihilism itself becomes nihilistic. "One can only drive this type of practical nihilist to despair, if one is prepared to be nihilistic oneself."⁹ His attack on truth and the severance of truth from subjective reality involves the abolition of thought itself. His writing pulsates with the dynamic vitalism of Nietzsche but at the end of it he uses his discovery of psychology to replace Nietzsche by Freud. The ultimate value of life is not the ascendant will-to-power, but "harmonious, unconscious life". The Freudian unconscious is invoked to salvage man from the disaster of human thought in general. Rescuing himself from nihilism, Seidel drives himself into oblivion.

Seidel saw the tragic consequences of his own thought. At the end of his book he followed Dostoevsky and claimed that he was on the side of

Christ against truth. But he openly advocated using Beelezebub to cast out the devil. Though he might crave the abolition of thought, through "unconscious life" he could not abolish his conscious despair. His final contribution to the nihilation of nihilism was to take his own life. Continually beset by severe depression, he wrote immediately prior to his death in 1924:

"I have to perish horribly. Death is the only form of expiation. But I must do it. I do not regret it. Not I, but the world-spirit, destiny, is realising itself through me. I know what a hideous task I have to fulfill. But all these things will have been stated in an age which marks the commencement of the great despair of western culture, as stipulated by Schopenhauer and Max Weber. They alone have pointed out its direction.

"Is it traitorous of me to leave my own work? Anyone who has read it, would themselves say that no man could possibly live with it any more....

"Ultimately the only thing left to me is to nihilate myself" 10

Whatever the psychological symptoms of his illness, Seidel had clung effectively to the logic of philosophical suicide. Fighting against truth he embraced illusion, fighting against rational order, he had embraced chaos. But he also saw the prospect of illusion and chaos as sounding the death-knell of western culture and this left him with an unconsolable despair. In a similar yet scarcely as extreme situation of being seized by the unrest of post-war despair, Ernst Juenger outlined in a letter to his brother a less grim but equally drastic solution. During a time "in which every handshake, every breath is a burden" he wrote, "... I recommend the categorical imperative as the means by which the atheistic worker, seized by vertigo on the dizzy heights of the Babylonian tower, can strengthen his own heart."¹¹ For Seidel there was no possibility of self-discipline at all. He died of despair.

In one sense however Seidel did see ideology as a positive breakthrough into the future. If the rationalisation of the world threatened the end of ideology, it was for the ideologues themselves to fight back and re-establish a direct relationship with reality. To do so they would have to radically forego the scientific problem of veracity. Seidel's position had led to an acceptance which he never truly made explicit - the acceptance of reality as illusion. Karl Mannheim, who knew and criticised Seidel's work, could not have failed to notice the extreme relativism of Seidel's approach and the difficulties that lay within it. He shared Seidel's radical scepticism but his approach was almost the reverse of Seidel's indiscriminate assault on objective truth. While he saw an age of crisis being created by the dethronement of absolute ideas and the growth of ideological pluralism, he sought to provide guiding principles which would overcome their fragmentary and dissipatory consequences. For Mannheim brought with him another source of influence from Budapest - the work of Georg Lukacs, former member of Max Weber's pre-war Heidelberg circle and later Marxist Minister of Culture in Bela Kun's short-lived revolutionary regime. Like Lukacs, he believed there was an immanent dialectic in history. He believed, as he put it, in "the rational intelligibility of the historical process". This belief remained the fundamental basis of his own utopianism - an optimistic belief, which Seidel for example could never share, that history could continually resolve in practice the incongruence in life between knowledge and reality.

The sociology of knowledge lies, in fact, in the shadow of both Marx and Nietzsche in two important ways. The first is in the idea of the knowledge of reality being rooted in man's being.

Mannheim's phrase Seinsverbundenheit des Wissens¹² - literally the "being-rootedness of knowledge" - was wide enough to absorb Marx's claim that social being was the foundation of human consciousness and Nietzsche's bio-social claim of knowledge being based on the instinctual drive of the human will-to-power. Thus Mannheim absorbed both the Marxian class critique of consciousness and the Nietzschean bio-social critique of reality. It was an act of synthesis however which enlarged and made more vacuous his own inconsistent usage of the being-rootedness of knowledge. The second fundamental imitation of Marx and Nietzsche lies in Mannheim's Entlarvung des Ideen - the unmasking of ideas. Nietzsche's massive critique of Christianity in The Genealogy of Morals as a morality of reassentiment is intended as an exposure of the concealment of its own will-to-power beneath the humanitarian apparatus of altruism, selflessness and pity. Nietzsche regarded his attack as an unmasking of the otherwise enigmatic triumph of the weak over the naturally strong. In the very act of revelation lay a diminution of the enemy's strength. Unmasking presented itself as a form of domination. In Marxism it is expressly so. Mannheim's distinction between "the particular conception of ideology" and "the total conception of ideology"¹³ revealed clearly his preference for the Marxist mode of criticism as the more effective. Marxism's total conception of ideology meant that criticism would nihilate its opponents not only by calling into question its epistemological or psychological basis but the social and historical situation in which it flourished. Thus Marx and Lukacs attacked the nineteenth century doctrine of political economy as an attempt by bourgeois ideologists

to construct universal laws of human production out of economic processes peculiar to a particular historical stage in the growth of capitalist society. They stipulated the limiting conditions under which it emerged and during which it flourished as being the constraints upon thought which made bourgeois ideology a partial and distorting doctrine of capitalist society. Lukacs in History and Class-Consciousness went even further than Marx in suggesting that proletarian class-consciousness, which is to all extent and purposes identical with own dialectical theory of history, was responsible for unmasking the limitations of bourgeois ideology and thus accelerating its revolutionary destruction.

What became clear to Mannheim was that the Marxist total conception radically enlarged the nihilating element in modern political doctrine. Theorists would consequently not only reject their opponent's arguments but explain as a consequence of their own doctrine why for social and historical reasons they could not possibly be right. The intellectual uncertainties of an age of dissolution and relativism were intensified by the proliferation of this ideological politics of nihilation and distrust. Thus Mannheim claimed that the sociology of knowledge "must become a systematization of the doubt which is to be found everywhere as a form of insecurity and uncertainty in modern life".¹⁴ Radical scepticism was a historically dynamic form which had to unmask the bias, partisanship and distortion of thought-forms in modern society. It also, however, had to rise above the malaise of mistrust of which it was an undeniable symptom.

At one extreme it embraced the decisive and devastating sense of an iconclasm which tore through to the roots of the world's pathology. At the other it marked time as a tactical device in the contestation of ideologically opposed groups demoralised by their own stalemate. In Nietzsche's terms it could be interpreted either as an authentic expression of the will-to-power or a symptom of decadence. In Lukacs' terms it could be seen as part of a total theory of bourgeois society or a symptom of false consciousness. Whatever it was, Mannheim's instinct led him to realise that it was crucial to the war of words in the political ideologies of the twentieth century.

Hermann Hesse in Steppenwolf provides an uncanny literary correlative to Seidel's faltering tirade against absolute ideas. Near the beginning of the novel, the Steppenwolf, middle-aged hero in passive revolt against bourgeois society, expresses in the mere look which flickers for a moment on his face, a whole damning indictment of an orthodox cultivated knowledge:

When the lecturer ascended the platform and began his address, many of his listeners had expected a sort of prophet and were disappointed by his rather spruce and conceited air. And when he proceeded by way of introduction to say a few flattering things to his audience, thanking them for their attendance in such numbers, the Steppenwolf threw me a quick look, a look which criticised the words and the entire personality of the speaker - an unforgettable and frightful look that spoke volumes!.... it not only unmasked the conceited lecturer and dismissed with irony the subject at hand, the expectant attitude of the public, the somewhat presumptuous title under which the lecture was announced - no Steppenwolf's look pierced our whole epoch, its whole surge and strife, the whole vanity, the whole play of a shallow opinionated intellectuality.¹⁵

Hesse presents us in no uncertain way with an extended image of the ecstatic conceit of unmasking. Proceeding from a particular incident at a particular moment in time it suddenly transcends its

spatio-temporal limitations to culminate in a grand crescendo of universal condemnation.

Hesse's extended image of dismissive revelation represents the operation of unmasking at its extreme utopian point, where critical criticism suddenly triumphs through its will-to-power. But Mannheim was more cautious and at times more gloomy. The example of Marxism was totally salutary. Starting out as the most devastating critique of modern society yet envisaged, it had itself become the subject of iconoclastic and critical attacks similar to those for which it was itself responsible. It had to suffer the slings and barbs it once considered as its own exclusive weapons. As far as the sociology of knowledge was concerned, Scheler had already taken up Lukacs' exhortation to autocriticism at the end of History and Class-Consciousness as a convenient invitation to test the ideological assumptions of Marxism. From both a vitalist and an idealist standpoint, he quite predictably found them wanting. He regarded Marxism as a distorting interest-ideology, which had arisen, as Marx claimed political economy had arisen, out of the industrial capitalist system of the nineteenth century. He turned the Marxist critique against itself by claiming that it shared the same symptoms as those of its proclaimed enemies:

Scientific rationalism and intellectualism and equally the proletarian pragmatism of the labour theory of value are false - they can both be represented as interest-ideologies; one that of the bourgeoisie, the other that of the proletariat.¹⁶

According to Scheler, therefore, Marxist ideology, which he interprets in a very mechanistic and materialistic manner, was the

mirror-image of the scientific and ascetic rationalism of the capitalist class. Both were hybrids of a Comtean scientific positivism which had produced an ascetic and utilitarian system of values in modern society. But Marxism, according to Scheler, legitimated industrialism specifically from the standpoint of the lower classes. To this extent it was a historical continuation of a perceptual world-view of subject classes which had operated throughout western history.

Sensing the ideological vulnerability of Marxism when confronted by its own weapons, Mannheim no longer considered it possible to believe in the Marxist prophecy of class revolution. Marxism had not dissolved but rather intensified the dilemma of ideological pluralism and the stalemate of ideological conflict. At a later date Mannheim was to put very precisely the fear to which this prospect had given rise. Endless and proliferating iconoclasm meant that all doctrines, traditional or innovatory, radical or conservative, ended up on a general epistemological rubbish dump:

"We live in an age in which the weapon of reciprocal unmasking and laying bare of the unconscious sources of intellectual existence has become the property not of one group among many but of all of them.... In the measure that the various groups have sought to destroy the confidence of their adversaries by their most modern weapon of unmasking, they have also destroyed.... man's confidence in human thought in general." 17

This process of "reciprocal unmasking" represented for Mannheim a levelling of ideological statuses. The idea of Scheler or Lukacs that dominant and subject classes had models of social perceptions specifically related to class functions of dominance and subjection is bypassed in Mannheim's critique of ideology by the implicit equalisation created by the anomic conditions of ideological conflict itself. While the social background of ideologies remained an

important yardstick for their evaluation, this social background is never analysed by Mannheim in terms of relative privilege or deprivation. It remained purely and simply a referent for partisanship. The whole of Mannheim's approach to ideology, with its emphasis upon the equality of ideological extremism, seemed to be a massive rationalisation of the sorry state of the Weimar Republic. Total parties with total conceptions of ideology battled with each other in uncertainty and confusion. Any form of political compromise constituted a potential loss of face.

In a way Mannheim had perhaps drawn excessive attention to the problem of ideological conflict by viewing it in such a pessimistic way. He presented the problem he thought necessary to be resolved in its worst possible light. Thus the solution itself would have to be equally radical. And it was. Although he distanced himself from the Marxist doctrine of class-struggle, Mannheim remained, probably through Lukacs' influence, a trenchant left-Hegelian. He clung to a radical and optimistic historicism after it was bereft of its specifically Marxian content. Thus he was never in danger of the suicidal subjectivist position adopted by Seidel. He did not attempt to sever the link between objective truth and social reality but to reaffirm it. Lukacs' "Bourgeois ideology" and "proletarian class-consciousness" re-emerge in Mannheim as the more general concepts of ideology and utopia. Mannheim thought it possible in any age to distinguish between doctrines which were legitimating elements of an existing order and those doctrines possessing revolutionary futuristic conceptions of a new social order. His criterion for distinguishing between them, however, was retroactive. "Ideas which later turn out to

be a distorted representation of past or potential social order are ideological. Those which successfully realising themselves in the succeeding social order are, relatively speaking, utopias."¹⁸ Under such a definition, a case could be made out for regarding Stalin's classless socialist society and Hitler's peoples' community as utopian - a claim historically made by the partisan supporters of Hitler or Stalin. The claim to utopianism is still controversial, and itself becomes sucked into the vicious circle of ideological conflict. Mannheim's utopian formalism thus ends up contributing to the ideological morass from which it seeks to extricate itself. The purpose of all political ideologies, whether radical or conservative, is to present their opponents, in Mannheim's sense, as ideological and themselves as utopian. In seeking to overcome ideological conflict, Mannheim merely formalises its most sophisticated tactical devices.

He possessed, however, another solution. As a response to possible condemnations of an excessive historical formalism, Mannheim turned to Alfred Weber's notion of a freischwebende Intelligenz - literally a free-floating intelligentsia. Mannheim regarded modern education as having the levelling effect of suppressing social differences and thus eliminating the basis of partisanship which lay in social differentiation. The potential objectivity of a value-free intelligentsia lay in its social distancing, but this distancing brought forth the prospect not of influence but of powerlessness. Deprived of partisan social commitment in the interest of knowledge Mannheim's intelligentsia was consequently deprived of revolutionary utopian inspiration. As we shall see, Hanz Zehrer of the Tat circle used Mannheim's idea to formulate the notion of a "revolutionary intelligentsia" but in doing so took the decisive step which Mannheim himself had been

loathe to make. As it was, no Mannheim but Scheler asserted the innovatory power of the intelligentsia in a more direct and immediate way. For Scheler, intellectualism was a form of elitism. Intellectuals were innovatory and pathbreaking because as a group they possessed special and exclusive features. The formulation of new ideas and new forms of culture was the work of a dedicated minority, not concerned in the first instance about their popular support:

"The positive factor responsible for the realisation (in society) of a purely cultural phenomenon is invariably the free activity and free will of a small number of persons, in the first instance of leaders, prophets and pioneers, who, by virtue of the well-known laws of contagion, effectively ensure the voluntary and involuntary imitation of the greatest number - the majority." 19

In a lecture at the Deutsche Hochschule fuer Politik in 1927 just prior to his death, Scheler made his position more concrete. Previously he had stated that social factors, what he called Realfaktoren, were only secondary factors opening and closing the "sluice gates of the spirit".²⁰ Unlike Mannheim, he saw ideas as being independent of social or historical origin. Now he advocated a vitalistic and elitist solution to what he considered was the intensification in the Weimar Republic of the classic German opposition between Macht and Geist. Scheler claimed:

"I am firmly convinced that a growing German elite can.... slowly penetrate and unobtrusively direct our political leadership in all areas.... Specifically, political elites hardly ever grow out of the political sphere, but are born in movements which are spiritually new, and at the same time impelled by a new feeling of vitality. Only then do they slowly enter the political domain." 21

While accepting the framework of democratic politics in Weimar, and himself supporting the Catholic Centre party, Scheler could only conceive of legitimacy in such a system emerging out of some form

of elitist and vitalist intellectual guidance. He was thus in a paradoxical situation of proposing as a solution to the ills of an unpopular and unstable democracy, an intellectual elitism which was clearly incongruent with it. The historical example which he chose to illustrate his belief was also unfortunate. He saw a similar vitality in the Fascist "movement of national rebirth in Italy". His sociology of knowledge, whose immediate purpose was to free knowledge from the charge of historical determinism while affirming the relevance of social factors to its social diffusion, never escaped from the Nietzschean heritage of his earlier Lebensphilosophie. Scheler was finally led therefore to advocate the disaffections of irrationalist vitalism as a means of legitimating the politics of compromise.

With respect to his Hegelian heritage, Mannheim was in something of a similar predicament. As a confirmed social democrat, he supported the Weimar Republic. His formalistic revolutionary utopianism committed him to historicist conjecture about radical and imminent change from the Weimar-type stalemate of total ideological politics. But Mannheim could give no suggestion as to what political doctrine was utopian enough to accomplish it. Rejecting Marxism because of its class-bound nature, he rejected anarchism because of its refusal to accept any elements in the existing order as dialectically indispensable to a future utopia and he rejected fascism because of its ahistorical and irrationalist approach to the seizure of power.²² Mannheim never gave any substantive grounds for what he might want a revolution. The spectre of cultural relativism and endless unmasking plus a dogged utopian belief

in the reason of history propelled his doctrine forward in a direction which politically he seemed to have already rejected. Positively glowing with the thought of revolutionary utopia, Mannheim could give no contemporary examples of it at all. His formalistic utopianism did however convey the desperation necessary to provide a solution to problems once they were stated, as Mannheim stated them, in such a totally relativistic way. Utopia was necessary at any price to transcend the spectre of powerlessness and intellectual vertigo which Mannheim had conjured up, and which in any possible formulation was intellectually intolerable. Honest and ruthless with himself to a perverse and tragic degree, Alfred Seidel had taken relativism at its lowest point - the point where nihilism existed in unison with its attempted nihilation as the nadir of total negation. Where the solution to nihilism was itself nihilistic, all that remained was philosophical suicide. The desperation of the illusion of ecstasy, of the utopian alternative signified above all the desperation of the retreat from suicide.

NOTESCHAPTER V

1. Spektator Briefe p.90-91. Cited in Fritz Ringer The Decline of the German Mandarins p.206-207.
2. Robert Musil, Der Mann Ohne Eigenschaften p.650-651. Berlin 1930.
3. Der Ueberwindung der Historismus, Berlin 1923 p.39ff.
4. See Stefan Zweig Die Welt von Gestern, p.314
5. "Historicism" in Essays in the Sociology of Knowledge, p.84ff. First published in Archiv fuer Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik, vol.52, No.1, June 1924.
6. Bewusstsein als Verhaengnis, Bonn 1927
7. *ibid*, p.220.
8. *ibid*, p.202.
9. *ibid*, p.204.
10. Erlangen, 20th October, 1924. *ibid*, p.45-46.
11. Letter to Friedrich Georg Juenger; 3rd December 1921 (Berlin), in Arwin Mohler (ed) Die Schleife; Dokumente zum Weg von Ernst Juenger, p.76.
12. See Ideology and Utopia, p.239
13. *ibid*, p.57ff.
14. *ibid*, p.45
15. Steppenwolf London 1961 (trans. by Basil Creighton) p.11-12
16. Die Wissenformen und die Gesellschaft, p.170.
17. Ideology and Utopia, p.37
18. *ibid*, p.184.
19. Scheler, *op.cit.*, p.21
20. *ibid.*, p.15f.
21. "Man and society in an age of adjustment" in Hendrik Ruitenbeek ed. Varieties of Classic Social Theory, p.386.
22. Mannheim, *op.cit*, p.119f.

CHAPTER VI

Rightist Interpretations of Utopia: Hans Freyer

After its publication in 1929, Mannheim's book Ideologie Und Utopie was one of the most discussed works in intellectual circles at the turn of the decade.¹ Extensive reviews and discussions of his thesis of "the existential determination of knowledge" as he called it, proliferated.² As well as acclaim his book came in for extensive criticism. Young marxist intellectuals at the newly formed Institut fuer Sozialforschung at the University of Frankfurt with whom Mannheim had close contacts, and who were then not widely known - Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Max Horkheimer, criticised Mannheim for having abandoned any tenable Marxist position.³ On the other hand among the more conservative intellectual circles his work was regarded, by virtue of its emphasis on the social origins of thought, as having made Marxism salonfaehig and undermined the whole German classical tradition. While some focussed almost exclusively on Mannheim's postulate of the existential determination of thought, others were clearly more excited by his analysis of utopias.

It was both features however which characterised the attack on Mannheim by the well-known philosopher and cultural critic Ernst Robert Curtius in his book written in 1932 German Spirit in Danger.⁴ Curtius clearly identified the tone and meaning of Mannheim's work with a more general wave of intellectual and political disaffection which had begun to sweep through Germany in the dying years of the Republic. In a general tone of foreboding his own book was a guide

intended for a fairly respectable and orthodox reading public, largely of the older generation, to the subversive subterranean currents of thought he saw circulating in the more politically extreme groups of the younger generation. In this context he considered Mannheim's work a danger to German youth and one which was most especially fertile in extreme right-wing rather than left-wing circles.

Ideology and Utopia "is a work which is now of a distinct and symptomatic significance, which can no longer be dismissed in contemporary political discussion and which has been duly studied and made use of in the right-wing revolutionary circles of the young." ⁵ Among the areas where Mannheim's work was being discussed and disseminated, Curtius mentions two major exponents of what he called his "sociologism" - the Leipzig professor of sociology, Hans Freyer and a circle of young intellectuals in Berlin grouped around the magazine Tat.

The way in which both Freyer and the Tat circle had interrupted Mannheim according to Curtius, lead them to a sociologicistic approach to knowledge and in particular to German classical learning and to an alarming tendency to give unqualified approval to the politicisation of social life which was taking place so rapidly in the party politics of that time. Equally important to both was something about which Curtius in his concern to demonstrate the total nihilism of Mannheim's influence was less forthcoming, namely the creation of utopias which could not be projected onto a future social order.

Hans Freyer

Hans Freyer as well as being considered along with Mannheim as one of the avant-garde sociologists of the time, was also active in the Youth movement. He was one of the predominant figures in

Ernst Buske's Freishar, which at the turn of the decade was probably the largest group within the Youth movement, which could broadly speaking be regarded as part of the radical right. Hence his writings while exhibiting many features of what one might call a mainstream sociological orientation based on Freyer's acquaintance with American as well as German sociology, also contain elements of voelkisch and bundisch exhortation which sometimes seem curiously anomalous. All in all his writings are too esoteric and hybrid to be placed firmly in either the Voelkisch, neo-conservative or national-revolutionary categories of the German right. As we shall see, however, his tendency to emphasise the sociological dimensions of revolution and the dynamic processes of modern society as opposed to categories of cultural or racial authenticity, place him nearer to revolutionary nationalism within the continuum of the conservative revolution.⁶ In addition his later essay of 1933 Domination and Planning entailed the rejection of some of his earlier voelkisch assumptions and showed the clear influence of Juenger and national-bolshevism.⁷

The influence of Mannheim on Freyer is at its strongest in his major sociological work published soon after Ideology and Utopia which he entitled Sociology as a Science of reality.⁸ His intention here is not only to provide a history of German sociological thought but an original contribution to contemporary sociology itself. Thus he attempts to link the two by means of a rudimentary Hegelian scheme whereby the history of sociological controversies is seen as a history of one school "superceding" in the Hegelian sense, its predecessor, until the "Wirklichkeitwissenschaft" school of which Freyer sees

himself as the main proponent emerges as being most in alignment with the future developmental tendencies of German society. This rather crude Hegelian conceit enables Freyer in particular to regard both Marxism as doctrine of class-structured society and the formal Sociology of Georg Simmel and Leopold von Wiese as aufgehoben.⁹

There was nonetheless a certain consistency and sophistication with which Freyer set up his methodological premises and a convincing appeal in the way in which he attempted to create a historical sociology. His work was influential for example upon political theorists such as Hermann Heller who were seeking ways out of the problems created by the ultra-idealism of Dilthey's Geisteswissenschaften.¹⁰ Freyer's Hegelianism manifests itself not only in his definition of sociology but in his conception of its task. Sociology is "the objective knowledge of the factual developmental tendencies of the present".¹¹ As a critical discipline it must attempt to uncover in the present social world the principles upon which the future social order is based. This, claims Freyer, is the essence of Mannheim's distinction between what is utopian and what is purely ideological. Sociology must place itself in the service of the future utopia by formulating in scientific terms the conditions of its possibility.¹² Yet sociological knowledge, the study of social reality, is not in itself a sufficient condition for the transition to utopia. It must be accompanied by action on the basis of this knowledge and knowledge itself is an offshoot not a precondition of a much wider human voluntarism which provides the motivation for social action.

This voluntaristic component of Freyer's thinking manifests itself more clearly in an earlier essay on utopia where he emphasises the primacy of the will as the basis for all future-oriented action.¹³

It is through the absolute nature of the will that man escapes from the mechanical causality of the material world. "My will," he writes, "has the power to tear apart the whole network of purely material motives within me."¹⁴ In his sociological work this emphasis on the "strength of will" as the source of a categorical imperative by which man can step outside of his material world manifests itself in Freyer's discussion of Mannheim. For Freyer the problem Mannheim had raised was that of "plural utopias", of a situation of doctrinal pluralism where all future-oriented doctrines attempt to destroy each other by imputing ideological distortion on the basis of social partisanship or prejudice.¹⁵ Such a situation invariably leads to cultural chaos, and out of such chaos it is only the knowledge of social reality aligned with the strength of the will which provide a formula for the transition to the authentic utopia of future society. But the predominant element is the will itself. The dialectic of historical change can be reduced to a collective voluntarism of futuristic goals which remain to be achieved:

"The hiatus between the present and future will not be bridged by material developments but through the will.... The system of structural concepts in sociology conceptualizes what is not yet social reality, but still the intentionality of social willing."¹⁵

Ultimately knowledge itself becomes the mere concretization of the dynamism of the collective will. "True willing", Freyer concludes, "is the foundation of true knowledge."¹⁷

Mannheim's obsession, the utopian transcendence of the ideologised world becomes in Freyer's formulation "the intentionality of social willing". The guarantor of utopia is the pure efficacy

of collective action. The ideologists are those who cannot align themselves with history, are the purveyors of false utopias whose distortions are revealed by authentic utopianism. Unlike Mannheim, however, Freyer goes further and gives a substantive historical context to his general statement of revolutionary utopianism. While Mannheim clearly saw some utopian transformation as being imminent in German society he never specified its exact nature: Freyer, on the other hand, saw it in terms of what he called a "revolution from the right".¹⁸ In the polemical tract of 1931 which he gave this name to, he embarked upon what can only be called a 'right-Hegelian' critique of modern industrial society. Freyer's object was primarily as Spengler's and Moeller's had been before him, to take revolution out of the hands of the political left by branding them as politically, and, in his own case sociologically, defunct.

His politicisation of Mannheim's substanceless dichotomy of ideology and utopia starts with an analysis of nineteenth century capitalist society similar in many ways to that of Spengler and Scheler, but with a Hegelian orientation which is clearly his own. The nineteenth century he says, is "the classic age of the revolution from the left."¹⁹ In a class-divided capitalist society the growth of the working class and its political organisation constituted a challenge to the hegemony of capitalist society. But the challenge was short-lived. The growth of citizenship and political parties meant the institutionalization of working-class activity as a political form of collective egoism within capitalist society which did nothing to prevent the growth of monopolies and the accumulation of capital. There occurred instead of revolution a convergence of interests of both

classes, as Spengler had claimed, and also a convergence of ideologies. Freyer saw the social-democrats in Germany as being ever-increasingly committed to a programme of reform through which the left became converted to liberalism. Hence he reiterates Spengler's assertion that both liberalism and socialism were part of the ideological superstructure of capitalism. In addition because no revolution had occurred, history had not been made. Instead Freyer proclaimed, "the nineteenth century had liquidated itself."²⁰ The modern socialist and communist parties had long settled for limited sectarian goals and were totally incapable of the emancipation of society itself.

Freyer's model of class-convergence leads him to contend that nineteenth century class society has been transformed into twentieth century industrial society where the industrial middle class and the industrial working class have a basic identity of interests and the same basic commitment to democracy as a political system. To search for revolutionary forces within modern society means going outside the system. Dutifully addressing himself, like the national-revolutionaries, to German youth he exhorted them to try and disseminate a historical consciousness of their own role within contemporary German society. As a leader of one of the largest groups in the youth movement, he clearly saw age-differentiation as an important factor in any modern revolution. Thus in the ranks of the Youth movement and the private armies of the political right, the Stahlhelm and the S.A. he saw a tremendous potential of revolutionary energy for coming revolution.²¹ In addition, however, his Hegelian scheme necessitated some conception of the class or stratum in opposition to industrial society which in the twentieth century would take over the

role of the working-class in the nineteenth without proving similarly defective.

For Freyer, this stratum is the amorphous undifferentiated Volk. The Volk are the German people outside of industrial society. At one point he calls them "the whole class, the whole estate, the whole people"²² and later claims that historically speaking, "after the fourth estate has fallen, the fifth estate takes over the heritage of revolution."²³ This romantic anti-capitalism common among Voelkisch theorists and present so strongly in the Youth movement presents the task of revolution as being the reinstatement of the unity of the Volk and the state on the new basis of a twentieth century society. But Freyer's utopia, in common with national-revolutionary thinking is not a 'society' as such. 'Society' itself is an artificial construct of nineteenth century thought, the abstract conceptualisation par excellence which arises from the historical situation of class division. It is "the abstraction of life from itself; the harnessing of the human race in the service of anonymous capital".²⁴ The twentieth century has made it redundant. Just as social classes are replaced by the Volk, so society is replaced by the state.

Freyer's revolutionary utopianism thus leads him not to a classless society, which he regarded as a nineteenth century utopia but to a Voelkisch state, and as such the role of sociology itself becomes redundant with this revolution from the right. According to Freyer, sociology is powerless to ascertain the nature of this emergent phenomenon of the Volk since it represents "the decree of the absolute"²⁵

Thus sociology itself declines with the world of industrial society of which it is a part. The new state restores the land in unspecified ways to its rightful heritage in a re-agrarianised paradise where, unlike industrial society, technology "is no longer a magical power medium in the hands of its owner but a wide stratum of nature, a network of arteries of mind and will, which the land brings together and by which it forges the unity of the human world." ²⁶ By virtue of this mystical fusion of technology and nature, technology simulates the conditions of nature itself.

Such an idea is, as we shall see, almost diametrically opposed to Carl Schmitt and Ernst Juenger's idea of technology as a force which conquers nature ²⁷ and Freyer himself went on to modify his own ideas. In Herrschaft und Planung (Domination and Planning) written in 1933, he accepts the validity of the wholesale planning of modern society. He does so specifically from a fascist viewpoint. Very much in accordance with his voluntaristic concept of social willing as the basis of social knowledge, he claims that planning is not based upon expertise alone but on the will to rule. "It is the rulers who plan", he writes, "not the planners who rule." ²⁸ Freyer's preference for a decisionistic as opposed to a technocratic model of planning also served as rationale for his conversion to national-socialism. It also signalled the end of his opposition to industrial society as such. The purely Nietzschean will-to-power which stands behind his analysis of revolutionary politics is modified to accept planning as a form of political domination. But his ideas never attained the force or complexity of those of Schmitt and Juenger by whom he was clearly influenced. In the meantime his very cogent

and influential idea of a 'revolution from the right' which seemed to many to capture the true nature of Nazism celebrated the triumph of the will over the social conditions which constrained it. A rightist revolution heralded the triumph of the people over society through the pure and unconstrained exercise of its will.

NOTESCHAPTER VI

1. The first edition published in Berlin contained chapters 2-4 of the first English edition published in London in 1936. For the English edition Mannheim wrote the first chapter as a special introduction and the last chapter is a translation of his article "Wissenssoziologie" originally published in Alfred Wierkandt's Handwoerterbuch der Soziologie (Stuttgard 1931).
2. An extensive list of the reviews of the book, compiled by Mannheim himself for the English edition can be found in the 2nd ed. p.301f.
3. See, for example Max Horkheimer "Ein neuer Ideologiebegriff?" Archiv fur die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung xv 1930. Republished in Kurt Lenk ed. Ideologie.
4. Deutsche Geist in Gefahr, Berlin 1932
5. *ibid.*, p.88.
6. For the discussion of categories within the "conservative revolution" see Mohler, *op.cit.*, chap.5.
7. See chapter II.
8. Soziologie als Wirklichkeitswissenschaft, Leipzig, 1930
9. For a favourable critique of Freyer's attack on Marxism and formal sociology and his attempt to bypass "materialism" and "formalism" in order to study "social reality" see the articles by the neo-conservative Albert Dietrich "Sociologie am Schiedewege" pts. 1,2 and 3, pp.18ff, 124ff, 201ff. Deutsche Rundschau, vol. CCXXXIII, 1932.
10. The influence of Freyer on the direction of Heller's work is discussed by Wolfgang Schluchter in Entscheidung fuer den Socialen Rechtsstaat.
11. Freyer, *ibid.* p.295.
12. *ibid.* p.301.
13. "Das Problem der Utopie" Deutsche Rundschau, vol. 183, 1928.
14. *ibid.* p.321.
15. Soziologie Als Wirklichkeitswissenschaft, p.299

16. *ibid.* p.304.
17. *ibid.* p.307
18. Revolution von Rechts (Diederichs: Jena 1931)
19. *ibid.* p.16
20. *ibid.* p.31
21. *ibid.* p.14
22. *ibid.* p.16
23. *ibid.* p.31
24. *ibid.* p.49
25. *ibid.* p.51
26. *ibid.* pp 66-67
27. See below chapter XI
28. Herrschaft und Planung Hamburg 1933, p.27. Freyer also claims that planning as an instrument of authentic political domination is neither ideological nor utopian, since it presupposes the existence of a concrete order of domination. "The situation where no domination exists is an ideology or a utopia." (p.34). Both ideologies and utopias are phenomena of an age of powerlessness characterised by social and political pluralism. Freyer's commitment to planning signifies his final rejection of Mannheim's utopianism.

CHAPTER VII

"Away from the Absolute - into Reality!" : Hans Zehrer's
national-revolutionary utopianism.

The Tat circle were a small group of young national-revolutionaries in Berlin, who in 1929 assumed the responsibility for producing and editing a journal for the well-known right-wing publisher Eugen Diederichs called Die Tat. The leader of the group and the editor of the magazine was a young journalist Hans Zehrer. The growth and success of the magazine in Zehrer's hands and its role in political intrigue in the crisis years of the republic has been well documented.¹ Zehrer's own journalistic experience on the Berlin newspaper of the famous Ullstein press Vossischen Zeitung clearly helped him in his attempt to popularise the journal among a young and educated middle-class audience. From the Vossischen Zeitung Zehrer brought with him a young economics specialist Ferdinand Fried and through his acquaintance with Eugen Diederich's son, Peter, was able to recruit two teaching assistants from Heidelberg university, Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann and Giselher Wirsing.² Both of them had been well-grounded in the social sciences and Eschmann had been taught by Alfred Weber and Karl Mannheim.³ Zehrer had earlier worked under Werner Sombart in Berlin but had to give up his studies through lack of financial support. A fifth editorial associate by the name of Horst Gruneberg, a secondary school-teacher, also joined the editorial board. As a strictly intellectual endeavour, replacing the voelkisch mysticism of its previous editors, the success of the magazine over a period of five years was remarkable. When Zehrer took over in 1929, 800 copies

were sold. By 1931, over twenty thousand were produced and in 1932 this had gone up to over thirty thousand.⁴

What was the secret of this success? Curtius, writing in 1932 claimed that the Tat circle had taken over from the Jugendbewegung the privilege of being the main focus of intellectual activity for nationalists of the younger generation.⁵ "This magazine", he went on to write, "has become in the last two years the assembly point of the young nationalists. In it there predominates, in contrast to the parties of Hitler and Hugenberg, an outspoken intellectualism of academic and sociological significance."⁶ Die Tat became the focal point of informed polemic against the Weimar system. More closely-knit than the factions of the Youth movement and more outgoing than the "new nationalists", it rapidly became a political influence of the first order among young intellectuals. But what is more remarkable was its capacity for journalistic self-sufficiency. The vast majority of its major articles came from the pens of its original editorial board of five, three of whom resorted to pseudonyms to conceal the profuseness of their own output.⁷ The use of pseudonyms was fashionable. In the Berlin Nazi journal of the Strasser brothers Nationalsozialistische Briefe, its young contributors used as their noms de plumes the names of the heroes of the 1525 Peasants Revolt. But for the Tat circle it was an attempt to disperse impressions of the undoubted cliquishness of its editors. Self-confident, iconoclastic and utterly contemptuous of the 'system', they produced a highly inventive and journalistic brand of social and political theorising which surpassed the efforts of all their rivals on both extreme left and extreme right to popularise themselves. Above all they milked the impotence of parliamentary politics from 1930 onwards in such a way

as to exaggerate their own political position out of all importance. They skilfully rode the crest of the wave which washed over the drowning corpse of democracy in such a way as to suggest that they were an intrinsic and necessary part of its momentum. Plunging into the unpredictable dynamics of political crisis, they created the temporary illusion of themselves as a revolutionary intelligentsia assured of a fundamental impact of the course of history. In 1933 they were to find out that history was to betray them.

Curtius' alarm signals about the 'critical nihilism' of Die Tat bespoke a fairly traditional though perceptive concern for the classic German ideals of Kultur and Bildung. He saw the sociologistic mentality of the younger generation as indicative of a modernist contempt for the benefits of classical learning. He claimed that it aggravated among German youth a craving for "a new and total doctrine of life and culture".⁸ Mannheim's sociology of knowledge which attempted to account for knowledge and culture in terms of the social conditions under which it was produced was a potential weapon upon which a new and barbaric anti-intellectualism could sharpen its teeth. The significance of Mannheim's doctrine for the Tat circle was slightly different from that claimed by Curtius. It seemed to have evaded the pitfalls of Marxist materialism on the one hand and effectively sabotaged the belief in absolute ideas on the other. Its dynamic utopianism steered a middle course between complete materialism and absolute idealism. Moreover by reaffirming the relevance of intellectuals to the transformation of ideas into social reality, Mannheim had reinstated intellectual activity within the sphere of the political. In so doing, he had provided a route out

of the politics of cultural despair.

The significance of this feat becomes clear in the favourable reception accorded to Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia on its publication in 1929. It was reviewed and acclaimed in the magazine by Horst Grueneberg.⁹ In a double review of Mannheim's book and Seidel's Consciousness as Doom, Grueneberg saw clearly the different options offered by the two writers to the problem of scepticism and relativism. Both pointed to the post-war crisis of learning in Germany. Both heralded the destruction of all notions of absolute truth. According to Grueneberg the result was "a perceptible incongruence between life and form". The Weberian "rationalisation of the intellect" had resulted in the technicisation of thought and the growth of sterile academic specialisation. How was Die Tat to react? Despite his own suicidal tendencies, Grueneberg claimed, Seidel had given the magazine a new slogan - "Away from the absolute - into reality!"¹⁰ He had claimed that only the ideologues could rescue science from its doom by a radical breakthrough into a new reality. Defeated by total relativism, it was a breakthrough which he personally had not been able to accomplish. Mannheim however had provided a way forward out of the crisis of learning. His distinction between ideology and utopia was the first attempt at a reformulation of science and a departure from abstract, idealist thinking. The distinction was similar to Seidel's distinction between "ideologies of self-affirmation" and "ideologies of self-denial". But it was more than this. It was "a positive scientific theory" which demanded the immediate destruction of the incongruence between life and form and the radical breakthrough

into social reality. Mannheim thus became the harbinger of the Tat circle's revolutionary utopianism. With Sorel, Pareto, Othmar Spann and the political theorist Rudolf Smend, he joined a select school admired by the Tat circle of what Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann called "post-materialist sociology."¹¹

According to Eschmann, the new school of sociology, itself not internally homogeneous, had nonetheless overcome the intellectual hegemony of Marxism and liberated sociology from its mechanistic and materialistic conception of history and society. It is quite clear here that the Marxism of which Eschmann is speaking is the Marxism of the pre-war German Social-Democrats. This was the doctrine of historical materialism 'inherited' from Marx through Engels and formulated systematically by Karl Kautsky, responsible for the "Erfurt programme" of 1891. Kautsky was in the decades before the war the one important Marxist theoretician of the S.P.D.¹² After the war, with the revolutions in Russia and Hungary as well as Germany, his doctrines became an object of ridicule among the Spartacists and the Bolsheviks. He was generally regarded by the radical left in post-war Germany as a figure of fun. Yet for the Tat circle his intellectual eclipse was an indication that the doctrine of Marxism as such had outrun its course. Unacquainted with the earlier writings of Marx which were only finally published in 1932, and blatantly ignoring the Marxian formulations of Lukacs, Karl Korsch or Rosa Luxembourg, they identified Marxism as both party and doctrine with the S.P.D. which at that time was the majority party in the ruling coalition of the Republic.

While their attacks on the fatalism and passivism of Kautsky's historical materialism mirrored in many ways the attacks

of the revolutionary left¹³ their attitude essentially differed over the role of Marxism in a democratic republic. For many socialists Marxist doctrine was the only basis of revolutionary activity. Out of the defeat of 1918 there eventually emerged the doctrinaire German Communist party. Zehrer on the other hand claimed that Marxism had already suffered its revolutionary swansong by establishing an intellectual hegemony (as historical materialism) within the ruling S.P.D. He applies at the level of ideology the notion propounded by Robert Michels about the organisation of socialist movements - namely that socialism perishes in its hour of triumph. For Zehrer then, historical materialism was part of the Weimar establishment.¹⁴ Accordingly a genuine debate on revolution within a Marxist context was totally impossible. Zehrer turned instead to the revolutionary transformation of German nationalism. In its urgent concern to avoid Marxism like the plague and yet remain revolutionary, the Tat-circle borrowed wildly and eclectically from "post-materialist" sociology. Having acquired a revolutionary utopianism from Mannheim, they reinforced it with an authoritarian model of the modern state culled from Othmar Spann and Rudolf Smend. Borrowings from Sorel and Pareto set the seal of a 'mythical' elitism upon this statist utopia. Like Hans Freyer they used sociology to formulate a blueprint for the creation not of a new society but a new authoritarian state.

The ever-ingenious Zehrer was quick to give a substantial content to Mannheim's vacuous notion of a "classless intelligentsia". Only months after Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia was published, he wrote an essay in Die Tat professing to have discovered an immediate role for a new revolutionary intelligentsia in Weimar Germany.¹⁵ But it

was scarcely a revolution of which Mannheim would have approved. They synthesised him with the irrationalist enemies he had already rejected - Sorel and Pareto and used his ideas to proclaim the immediate necessity of a "revolution from above" supported by the German middle classes. The very instrument of intellectual endeavour which Mannheim considers so crucial - the ability of intellectuals to distance themselves from all forms of social partisanship is soon lost in the work of Zehrer. The responsibility of the intellectual is not towards society or to scientific objectivity but primarily towards himself. His political commitment must be seen not as the fruition of a rational social consciousness; it must be seen as an attempt at political revenge against a ruling establishment which has excluded him from power. It is not a demand for social justice but a personal rebellion founded on resentment:

"Revolutions are primarily speaking intellectual in origin and only in a secondary sense political and economic.... The intellectual must put on masks, enter into disguises. He must transform himself into a real power so that he can incite rebellion against the powers which hinder and constrain him."¹⁶

The cynical and at the same time enthusiastic evocation of revolutionary activity as a rationalisation of personal revenge is unthinkable without the cumulative impact of Nietzsche's will-to-power, Pareto's elitism and Sorel's description of political doctrine as 'myth'. Pareto in particular had provided the historical scenario for the brazen adulation of an elitist seizure of power that was periodically inevitable and undeterred by the materialist constraints which the German Marxists had thrust in the face of history.¹⁷ The intelligentsia was its own will to revolution. At the same time Zehrer realised like Pareto that social factors were relevant to the

circulation of elites. Where he differed from the Marxists was in the question as to which social classes provided fertile revolutionary soil. Like Freyer he believed that the so-called proletarian revolution of the left was a nineteenth century phenomenon beset by political entropy. While Zehrer believed that the analysis of the class-structure of modern society was relevant to revolutionary strategy, he refused to accept the Marxist premise that revolution was the sole and exclusive property of the working-class. But if he realised that revolution had to have a social basis, where did he look for it?

Zehrer adjudged the working-class to be defunct as a self-contained revolutionary force. His attitude towards it was conditioned by his attitude towards the S.P.D. which he saw as part of the ruling class, the political bosses in fact of the Weimar Republic. Capitalising on Michel's classic pre-war study of the party and Weber's analysis of bureaucracy, he saw the party as an oligarchic and bureaucratic apparatus unresponsive to social change. Its political institutionalisation of working-class radicalism meant that to all extents and purposes socialism was defunct within the movement.¹⁸ Moreover Zehrer treated as derisory the suggestion by Kautsky that there was always room within the S.P.D. for an autonomous critical intelligentsia. The S.P.D. had excluded the intellectuals from power and turned those intellectuals who supported the Republic into "an intellectual ruling stratum without battalions and without real power."¹⁹ Where then should a revolutionary intelligentsia look for a real source of socialism? The opportunities for socialism which Zehrer regarded as credible were those suggested by Spengler in Prussianism and Socialism and Hendrik de Man in his book The Psychology of Socialism (Zur Psychologie des Sozialismus).

De Man in his book, first published in 1927, attacked the materialistic animus of orthodox socialism in a similar vein to Zehrer. He prescribed a massive renewal of faith of an religious and chiliastic nature as the means of its purification. "Socialism is a passion not a cognition" he stated, "...I firmly believe there will be a swing of the pendulum and that the masses will return from the materialist cynicism which now prevails to the religious fervour which animated socialism in its earlier days."²⁰ Zehrer used de Man's critique of the mechanistic and materialistic nature of party-regimented socialism as the basis for a wider onslaught on the rationalist Marxist critique of class-consciousness in general. Marxist dialectics, he claimed had overlooked the basic motivational impulses of socialism. "Class-consciousness" he consequently stated "in the sense of the rational knowledge of economic class-interests is the outcome of common sentiments, not its point of departure."²¹

De Man's call for the injection of quasi-religious faith into socialism, perhaps prophetic of the rise of national-socialism, seemed incompatible with the austere duty-bound Prussian socialism of Spengler. Nonetheless it had a point of confluence in the front-experience. Here, as Spengler had suggested, a sense of duty and a sense of social solidarity existed side by side. Moreover the front was a new arena of human exploitation. Zehrer said of the war-generation:

"This generation returned home as socialists not because they had read and understood Karl Marx but because they had experienced in the community of life and death social injustice in the deepest sense of the word and had formulated a justification of its social resentments which previously thrived only in the working-class."²²

The front-generation, however, was neither elite nor mass. It straddled both of them, yet formed no more than a segment of either. In looking at the composition of the potential revolutionary mass Zehrer went

further than "new-nationalism" and looked at the contemporary structure of German society in the post-war period. Here he attempted to align the resentment of the war-generation with that of those social strata who had suffered most from the rule of social-democracy in the republic. Regarding the cult of the front-experience as valid but exhausted by the immediate out-pourings of Juenger and his circle, he sought theoretical originality elsewhere.

He turned instead to an analysis of the German middle-classes (Mittelschichten) who had suffered so heavily in the German inflation of 1923 and were to suffer again during the Great Depression. The debate about the role of these occupational strata within the social structure of a capitalist society had been revived in academic circles by Lederer and Marschak²³ in their discussion of the possible "proletarianisation" of both the new and old middle-classes - of employees and officials as well as artisans, shopkeepers and small businessmen. The fear of "proletarianisation" was itself strong among many sections of the German middle class after the experience of 1923 and constituted one of the central themes of the German cinema of the twenties, especially in the so-called street films.²⁴ Applying Marxist analysis to the position of the new middle classes, Lederer and Marschak contended that in conditions of severe economic crisis these strata would sink into the proletariat. What was new was their analysis of the white-collar employee in terms similar to the Marxist conception of the classic petty bourgeoisie. They predicted that the bourgeois aspirations of the white-collar worker in modern society would be drastically undermined by adverse economic conditions. Superimposed upon this dimension was the question of the rationalisation of organisations in the interests of bureaucratic efficiency. In 1930 Siegfried Kracauer had written a remarkable series

of articles in the "Frankfurter Zeitung"²⁵ articulating through depth interviews and the like, the cultural self-image of the employee (Die Angestellte) in his work-setting. The sense of purposelessness and cultural despair, the ever-recurrent uncertainty about job-prospects, the loss of identity before ever-increasingly rationalised procedures of work are the basic images which Kracauer presents. The dimension of cultural exploitation is added to that of economic exploitation. The 'employee' is anonymous atomised man who takes refuge in the new forms of urban mass-culture to offset the affliction of his "spiritual homelessness".²⁶

Kracauer's description of the employee gave rise to Hans Fallada's famous "Kleiner Mann". Fallada inspired by Kracauer's description of the anomie and rootlessness of the employee in urban life used it as a starting-point for his best-selling autobiographical novel, What now, little man? Kracauer's cultural critique of the white-collar worker which approximated in some aspects to the postulates of later mass-society theorists about urban life, was nonetheless criticised and rejected in Die Tat for reiterating the Marxist "fallacy" of proletarianisation. Eschmann, in his review of the book²⁷ quite clearly stated the view of the Tat circle when he said that the mechanistic notion of the automatic proletarianisation of the employee was a false assumption of bourgeois Marxism. According to Eschmann the unique forms of exploitation experienced by the new middle classes would lead them to search for autonomous, that is non-Marxist, forms of political expression, and thus transcend their proletarianisation. Thus it was no coincidence that the largest trade union mentioned by Kracauer, as organising white-collar employees, the Deutschnationale Handlungsverband, was not Marxist in its orientation, but nationalistic and anti-semitic. According to Eschmann it was precisely under conditions where proletarianisation became a real possibility that the middle classes strove for new

and revolutionary forms.

For Zehrer this struggle was the basis of the potentially revolutionary nature of the middle classes. "This economically proletarianised stratum," he wrote, "struggles desperately to assert its own individual position precisely because it distinguishes itself both spiritually and culturally from the proletariat."²⁸ In addition the growing rationalisation and bureaucratisation increased rather than reduced the ranks of the employees and the self-employed in modern capitalist society and the Marxist hope of class polarisation therefore bore no correlation with the economic deprivation of the middle classes as such.²⁹ The middle classes were fertile material for what Zehrer called the "revolution from above" conducted by the elitist intelligentsia. But what are to be the connections between the intellectual elite and the revolutionary mass? While Zehrer claims that the elite should be able to mobilise the middle-classes on the basis of objective social conditions, i.e. their class exploitation, he clearly feels that stronger bonds of attachment are needed to cement their relationship. He therefore takes a step which is superfluous for the consistency of his argument but consequently undermines it quite drastically. He claims that the revolutionary intelligentsia will want to support the middle classes because that is precisely where their own social origins lie;

"The majority of the intelligentsia has its origins in this social stratum which can be characterised as middle-class, and so it is, sociologically speaking, bound to this class."³⁰

Starting from Mannheim's position of the autonomy of the intellectuals, Zehrer in an astonishingly jejeune manner, reverts back to the premise of social partisanship which Mannheim had wished at all costs to avoid. His conclusions are thus diametrically opposed to his premises! Having stated that intellectuals can instigate revolution regardless of their social background, he now claims their social background is vital to

the whole process of revolutionary mobilisation. The educational deprivation of young German students and intellectuals from the middle-classes corresponds to the economic deprivation suffered by their families. They are made revolutionary therefore by their own social experience of hardship. Zehrer totally contradicts himself by confusing two arguments about the radicalisation of intellectuals which are arrived at separately and independently. On the one hand the intellectual in his desire for power cynically exploits any form of social disaffection; on the other the middle-class intellectual in contemporary Germany is radicalised by the sufferings of his own class in which he himself shares. The contradiction is superficially a symptom of the intellectual naivety of Zehrer's argument. In reality it is a contradiction embedded in fascism itself. Fascism was a middle-class revolt against modern society. It was also a doctrine diametrically opposed in its nature to the humanistic components of the ideas which emerged from the French Revolution of 1789, and which in the nineteenth century had been associated with the ascendancy of the middle-classes. Zehrer was torn between the idea that revolution was necessary because the middle-classes had been betrayed by humanist ideas traditionally associated with them but no longer relevant to their condition, and the notion that because such humanist ideas were no longer relevant, no ideological justification based on social disaffection was necessary for the elitist revolutionary seizure of power. Socially fascism supported the interests of the impoverished middle-classes. Ideologically it advocated revolutionary elitism, in which the masses were of no real significance.

Even prior to the great depression, the Tat circle had attacked middle-class impoverishment and unemployment. Forseeing a problem

which in recent decades has afflicted all advanced industrial societies, Zehrer spoke of the growth in higher education of "an academic proletariat" of middle-class origins.³¹ During the twenties in Germany the problem of graduate employment was certainly a pressing one. Roughly a half of graduating students were able to find jobs for which their academic qualifications were necessary.³² After the Wall Street crash the situation was aggravated and university entrance numbers surged upwards because of general unemployment.³³ For Zehrer in particular this represented a further threat to middle-class life-styles. The middle-classes were culturally exploited by increasing academic specialisation and rationalisation of academic life. University education was a compromising solution for those sections of the middle-class sandwiched between big business and labour and finding themselves economically helpless. The humiliations of academic exploitation was the price paid by the middle-classes for lack of political organisation and political awareness which characterised their working-class antagonists of the S.P.D.³⁴

At the same time Zehrer claimed this very lack of awareness was the necessary precondition for revolutionary mobilisation of the middle class. The political agitation of an intellectual elite would transform the Mittelstand into a class-for-itself, which would subsequently revolt against both organised labour and organised capital. The "revolution from the right" against industrial society envisaged by Freyer is replaced here by the idea of a Revolution der Mitte, a revolution of the centre.³⁵ The intellectuals are equipped to lead because they share in the deprivation of their own class. The "socialist" example they follow is that of the front-soldier, not the proletarian. Zehrer had given here something which hereafter he became reluctant to admit - a remarkably accurate sociological description of

the rise of Nazism. He provided some three or four years before the Nazi seizure of power the thesis circulating among modern political sociologists of "the fascism of the centre".³⁶ He had in fact scooped academic social scientists in giving a very precise account, from a partisan standpoint, of the potential of Nazism.

From 1929 to 1933 the possibilities of a "revolution of the centre" were substantiated. The Nazis transformed themselves into a mass political party by successfully appealing to the peasants, to small traders and businessmen, and to white-collar workers. They took over almost completely the voters of the traditionally liberal small centre parties, and in the 1930 elections they also took a substantial proportion of votes from the conservative D.N.V.P., especially from less prosperous middle-class voters in rural and regional areas.³⁷ The success of the national-socialists did not lie however in a self-conscious ideological formulation of their class position. In their emphasis on the Volksgemeinschaft they were anxious to avoid class sectarianism. But their political instinct for exploiting middle-class rassentiment was a crucial weapon. And for this theoretical sophistication was not really necessary. Furthermore it was shown to all extents and purposes to be dispensable. Nazism provided one of the few historical examples of a revolutionary elite which was not predominantly Jacobinist and intellectualist. Not only were few of the Nazi leaders intellectuals in any real sense of the word, their strategy involved the creation of a mass party following by legal and parliamentary means which completely alienated the Tat circle. At the same time it made Zehrer change his attitude towards revolution itself. He saw the growing success of the communists and the Nazis not as evidence of the electoral and parliamentary effectiveness of the extreme parties but as growing

evidence of the unpopularity of the parliamentary system as a whole. He also saw that the working-class itself could not be ruled out of the reckoning. With the increase in unemployment and the decline of the influence of Social-Democratic trade unions, many workers had turned to the communists with the expectation of militant action including possible revolt. Other unemployed workers were recruited into the ranks of the S.A. The two parties had monopolized the extreme forms of radical disaffection against the Republic and to some extent the Tat circle's contempt for the sterile dogmatism of the K.P.D. and the intellectual inadequacies of the national-socialist leaders was tinged with envy and frustration.

Their own model of revolutionary struggle was that of Italian fascism. It was the violence and the ruthlessness of the movement - its total contempt for legality which appealed to them. In fascism not only did Eschmann and Zehrer find the mobilization of the middle-classes and the front-veterans but also the incarnation of the sociology of Sorel and Pareto in a utopian and particularly unique form.³⁸ They regarded the fascist "utopia" as the cornerstone of modern nationalism. It had shown once and for all that the doctrine of the revolutionary centre could not be a class doctrine since all class doctrines, according to Eschmann, were essentially counter-productive, merely mobilizing the class opponent into action.³⁹ It had to be a myth beyond class - a myth of the nation. Hence the middle classes were not mobilized to struggle exclusively for themselves but for the nation. The "distinct sociological efficacy" of the fascist utopia is that it aligned theory to reality and brought into revolutionary nationalism the possibility of a mass social base extending far beyond the limited groups of front-fighters and their adherents. But it did this by stressing an ideal beyond reality which was in effect myth.

The middle classes had no structural unity and they had to be bound together by the myth of the nation;

"These strata can manifest their unity only in a great community, in the Volk or the nation, not in a trade union, an association, a class or any suchlike organisation - it can only be through an ideal, a myth". 40

Zehrer regarded parliamentary politics as a form of unforgivable compromise which negated revolutionary nationalism in its essentially mythic form. From the outset he had given a clear warning to his nationalist readers to stay clear of party politics and spurn the approaches of the national-socialists.⁴¹ But for those who took Die Tat's ideological standpoint to heart, the only politically decisive choice was the Nazis. There seemed no alternative. In fact the more educated and middle-class members of the younger nationalist generation, many of them either joined, or voted for the party in large numbers.⁴² Without a doubt the Nazis represented the most politically effective movement which was both nationalist and revolutionary. From the fragile minority in the Youth movement, the national-revolutionary sects and the Free Trade Unions who managed not to succumb to Nazi enticements, Zehrer attempted to mould the basis for a "third front" which was independent of party regimentation and bureaucratic constraints.⁴³ This idea in fact was to form the basis of his political intrigues in 1932 with General Kurt von Schleicher who envisaged a Bonapartist coup as the solution to the political power-vacuum of the Republic. Zehrer's independent but militant nationalists with the possible support of the trade unions and the Northern wing of the Nazi party under Gregor Strasser were ideally to provide the power base for Schleicher's initiative - the short-lived and unsuccessful initiative which was to become the new pragmatic version of Zehrer's 'revolution from above'.⁴⁴ But Zehrer's own subterfuges were dogged by the constant feeling that the Nazis had captured the hearts and minds of the revolutionary masses

and consequently could never afford to be ignored. His personal oscillation between revolutionary elitism and the urge to establish links with the new social reality of the Nazi-controlled masses made his attitude towards Nazism, despite its anti-intellectualism and its use of parliamentary methods, favourable to the end.

If the astonishing Nazi success in mobilising the middle-classes was one reason for Zehrer's disillusionment with an elite-controlled revolution of the centre, the social and economic effects of the depression was another. Ferdinand Fried the Tat economist achieved fame overnight with his book The End of Capitalism⁴⁵ in which he set out a model of autarchy and reagrarisation as the solution to Germany's domination by western industrial capitalism. Fried's in many ways absurd and retrogressive arguments were nonetheless coloured by an awareness that economic catastrophe had affected the lives of all ordinary Germans. He realised that it was impossible to regard either the middle-classes or the working-classes as the exclusive or even predominant victims of what had happened. He consequently made out a case for looking at German society in economic terms which vastly extended the non-privileged sector beyond orthodox class dimensions. He placed people in three socio-economic categories - a class of owners of capital (Besitz), a middle-class (Mittelstand), and a class of non-owners (Nicht-Besitz).⁴⁶ In terms of numbers, he places a hundred thousand of the population in the first category, four million in the second and sixty million in the third. Given these distinctions, the first or upper-class is composed of rich capitalists, the middle-class of the successful professions and businessmen and the third is a residual category of non-ownership expanded by the economic crisis of the depression. It includes peasants, businessmen, employees and manual workers. Fried in fact amalgamates the old-middle, new-middle and working class into a stratum he calls "the lower non-privileged

class".⁴⁷

However dubious a framework for social stratification, this idea of a lower non-privileged class provided the Tat circle with an essential distinction between capital and the masses. Since economic deprivation cut across traditional class lines in times of extreme crisis, all economically deprived social strata formed, according to Zehrer, a unified coalition against capital. The publication of Ortega y Gasset's The Revolt of the Masses in 1931 thus came as a sudden revelation to him, for it shows the potentially rebellious nature of the "masses" as a whole. The breakdown of class barriers in modern society and the formation of masses have interlocking political and economic dimensions. In the same way as the masses are excluded from capitalism, they are alienated from the democratic party system. Zehrer's consequent rejection of the exclusive revolutionary role of the middle classes was due without a doubt to the widespread and catastrophic effects of the economic crisis in Germany. He saw the masses as being politically organised by the Nazis and the Communists, but for the same reason being politically divided because of what he considered to be the traditional class and political attitudes of the two parties. While both contained within their ranks the sources of immense revolutionary energy, while both were filled with the ranks of the post-war younger generation, they dissipated their strength by fighting against each other instead of joining forces to attack the parliamentary and capitalist system from a position of strength. Zehrer concluded that their unrelenting hostility towards one another was a result of a special type of false consciousness which was the product of liberal thinking - namely to perceive political divisions in terms of left and right, the traditional distinction, which had been the heritage of "the religion of 1789".⁴⁸ The new role of the national-revolutionary

intelligentsia was to liquidate the premises of this ideological obscurantism and destroy the very conceptual language within which it propagated itself. In this way, freed from the remnants of liberal ideology, both parties could pool their differences, and as a unified revolutionary movement find common cause.

The Struggle for Language

Zehrer's perception of the crisis in democracy which he and his circle had welcomed with open arms was guided all the time by the feeling that a new reality had presented itself with which the existing conceptual apparatus of political thought was inadequate to deal. Reality, in advance of thought had made the whole liberal vocabulary of parliamentary language completely obsolete. But language was that aspect of social reality which changed more slowly than reality itself.⁴⁹ Language embodied tradition and legitimated the tendency of traditional power-interests to prevent social change. In revolutionary periods there was a widespread experience of radical disjunction between thought and feeling.⁵⁰ In the resultant conceptual chaos Zehrer sees a situation similar to Mannheim's internecine conflict of ideologies - a total scepticism and despair in the face of mistrust and ideological distortion which can only lead to desperate forms of activism. "Out of the inadequacy of linguistic materials grows an activism which can only fulfill itself ultimately in a physical manner."⁵¹ Thus the street fights and the para-military formations of the political parties are seen as a response to the inadequacy of political concepts to render themselves utopian - to transcend the stalemate of an ideological conflict carried out in a traditional vocabulary. The role of the national-revolutionary intelligentsia is to create a new language consonant with the social forces of the new reality of Germany. It would achieve a revolutionary breakthrough and

liberate the parties of the revolutionary masses from their slavery to traditional political terms of reference by liquidating the distinction between left and right and destroying the legitimacy of the "conservative-liberal-socialist Gemeinschaft",⁵² that is, what Schmitt called the "common vocabulary of modern parliamentarianism".⁵³

The new utopian language congruent with the new reality is the language of national-revolutionary sociology. Its understanding of the dynamic revolutionary forces of modern society enables it to recognise that the distinction between left and right is false. The crucial distinction is between revolutionary and conservative.⁵⁴ While conservative policies can be either reactionary or reformist, Zehrer sees "conservatism" as a generic concept referring to a definite stake in existing economic and political power. Ideological programmes are no guarantee of either revolutionary or conservative steadfastness. Conservative parties can under certain conditions be radicalised and revolutionary parties become conservative. This follows very much Mannheim's conception of utopianism, whereby it is no longer possible to judge revolutionary movements on the basis of their ideological pronouncements but upon their results. It is the theorist not the politician who decides in principle what is revolutionary, but as the Tat circle was to learn much to its chagrin, it is the politician who decides in practice. Whatever his shortcomings on this issue, Zehrer was still perceptive enough to see that the politics of the Weimar Republic had made the traditional distinction between "left-wing" and "right-wing" parties totally inadequate. In a Germany dominated by a western political system and reeling before the crisis of the western economy, les extrêmes se touchent. Whatever their political labels, the owners and the rulers are conservative and the propertyless and the ruled are

revolutionary. The radicalisation of the "right" by the Nazis and the "left" by the communists can only be understood as the consequence of the movements of the Social Democrats and the centre parties into conservative positions of power.

This change in political meanings however, has its own historical dimension. It does not provide the basis for a purely cyclical view of history but rather a conceptual model for what Zehrer called "unfinished revolutions". The February revolution of 1917 in Russia and the 1918 uprising in Germany are two historical examples which Zehrer uses to show how revolution occurs in two stages - in the first instance a change in values and in the second a change in social and economic conditions which is more radical and dynamic than the first. Thus Germany awaited its October revolution and until then operated in the vacuum of a "Kerenski epoch", of ideological confusion and political chaos, where everyone awaited the second revolutionary seizure of power.⁵⁵ It is in the unfinished revolution that the linear conception of politics changes first into a broken line (from 1918 to 1923) and finally into an elipsis.⁵⁶

The new utopian language by which Zehrer claimed the masses could be mobilised into a united revolutionary movement incorporating all the radical parties was the language of national-revolutionary sociology. The 'democratisation' of the concepts of political myths, the circulation of elites, and the path from ideology to utopia, were the essential components of the breakthrough into the new revolutionary order and the final liquidation of the traditional political models of the Wilhelmian era. One of the more gadfly fantasies in Zehrer's revolution from above was that of teaching the masses the concepts of a post-materialist sociology! Drawing strength from the magazine's growing influence, the Tat circle fantasised about what could be achieved when

their utopian dreams of power were realised. But the fantasy was nurtured on the power-vacuum in Germany which followed Brüning's emergency decrees, and the illusions were brief. Like the other national-revolutionaries, Zehrer and his associates had been totally out-flanked by the quasi-legality of national-socialism and equally surprised by the degree to which the plebians on its flank maintained a contemptuous theoretical silence on their own sociological and historical role.⁵⁷

Zehrer's misinterpretation of the national-socialists' assessment of mass party politics, which Hitler and other Nazi leaders saw as having a purely tactical value, meant that he drastically underestimated the revolutionary nature of a movement which was in many ways following the course he had charted with some of his own ideological sophistication or political self-consciousness.

The Utopian State

Zehrer's utopia was neither a classless society in the Marxian sense, nor some anarchist utopia of collective-self-government. Despite his attachment to sociology as a radically new and relevant doctrine of social reality, his political aims remained within the doctrinal paradigm of German nationalism - the creation of a strong authoritarian state. Where he differed from conservative nationalists was in the essentially dynamic model of social change which he used as a framework for the discussion of the new state. The dynamics of modern society could not be ignored but must be pursued relentlessly whatever the result. Mannheim had suggested this categorically, but there were also others. Two of the most influential political theorists in national-revolutionary circles, both of whom took account in their own way of the dynamic nature of modern society were Carl Schmitt and Rudolf Smend. In his essay published in 1923 on parliamentary rule, Schmitt had provided a classic

refutation of modern democracy as a mass-democracy.⁵⁸ It had clearly influenced Mannheim's rejection of liberal utopianism as a superficial quest to seek out truth through the principles of debate,⁵⁹ and Zehrer's image of parliamentary democracy as a nineteenth century institution unable to cope through its pluralistic mechanisms with the chaotic consequences of mass-democracy in the twentieth century.⁶⁰ The more important influence of the two however was Rudolf Smend, one of the writers discussed by the magazine in their abortive series on modern sociologists. One of the reasons that the Tat circle tended to look on Smend as being more sociologically than politically oriented was his concern to construct a model of the state in which all social forces found relevant and appropriate modes of political expression. This he called "integration theory".⁶¹

Smend had argued that the state must functionally integrate the collectivity, that is society, by direct and dynamic means. The vitality of the state arose when it was firmly rooted in an external social reality. Thus it must, according to Smend, become a plebiscite which repeated itself daily in order to ensure that no barriers existed between the political apparatus of the state and the life of its subjects.⁶² Its continual integration of social forces into the polity transformed it into a dynamic totality. "Its totality", Smend claimed, "is that of a historically fluid and realistic whole, not of a permanent, comprehensive and systematic whole".⁶³ The labile integration of all social and cultural life into the state would break down the abstract formalism and remoteness of political rule. For Die Tat the implications were clear. Smend had presented the problem of grounding the state in social reality in a way analogous to Mannheim's attempt to ground utopian thought in social reality. The

state was potentially as dynamic and utopian as thought itself. Given the right formula for integration not only social life but human culture as a whole could find a full and unhindered expression.⁶⁴

Although Smend did not specify the exact type of political system which could perform the function of social integration, he thought that parliamentary government was totally incapable of doing so. Within the Tat circle, however, his own model was compared with existing political regimes. Grueneberg claimed that Smend's notion of the comprehensive integration of society by the state had been put into practice by Italian fascism.⁶⁵ He conceived of Smend's model in terms which Smend did not specifically use, as that of a fascist authoritarian state. The Tat-utopia then became an authoritarian utopia in its fullest sense. Social integration was an euphemism for a new type of organic unity guaranteed by the domination of the state over society. The age of critical criticism was to be superceded by the age of certainty where the loss of autonomy suffered by the intelligentsia would be atoned for by its incorporation into a new dynamic political elite.

The theoretical legacy of Smend becomes all the more significant when it becomes clear how much it is embedded in the course of Zehrer's pragmatic political intrigues with General Kurt von Schleicher, Defence Minister in von Papen's cabinet in 1932.⁶⁶ In return for financial support for a daily Berlin newspaper, the Taegliche Rundschau, which the Tat circle first started to publish in 1932, Schleicher tried to gain support of a Zehrer-organised "third front" for his own bid for political power within the D.N.V.P. against von Papen.... But the national-revolutionary groups which Zehrer tried to recruit, along with some independently right-wing trade unions and groups in the Youth Movement were not responsive to his overtures.

Schleicher and Zehrer saw in each other the instruments of their respective ambitions. While Schleicher saw Zehrer as a pawn by which he could gain support from the fascist intellectuals for a sort of Prussian Bonapartism, Zehrer saw in Schleicher the man most fitted to carry out the revolution from above. Since neither possessed access to mass support both eventually fell victims of the power-vacuum of Weimar democracy. Despite his elitist prejudices however Zehrer saw the main enemy to Schleicher in the middle of 1932 as being Franz von Papen the head of the bourgeois German Nationalist party, rather than Adolf Hitler. Hitler possessed mass revolutionary support whereas the reactionary Papen had none. If Zehrer had to make a choice between national-socialism or reactionary conservatism it was clear that his choice lay with the former rather than the latter.

In the summer of 1932, Papen's position seemed superficially at least to be stable and secure.⁶⁷ He had just formed a so-called "cabinet of barons", made up of a reactionary Prussian nobility from which the Nazis as coalition partners had been effectively excluded. Papen in fact was attempting a tactic which later proved his downfall but which was commonplace among many conservatives.⁶⁸ He thought an alliance with Nazism in which the Nazis were effectively excluded from positions of power was the only means of controlling the politically irrational masses in periods of crisis. Hitler and Strasser however protested that this was tantamount to a denial of the will of the people, since the majority party in the coalition, the Nazis, had no effective political control. While Papen's 'cabinet of barons' ironically provided an important anti-democratic precedent for the Nazi seizure of power, they themselves used pseudo-democratic arguments to contest its validity. It was these very arguments which Zehrer himself took up. For they paralleled the theoretical argument he had

derived from Smend about the integration of state and society. In the political situation of 1932, the exclusion of the Nazis as the major partner in the Harzburg Front, from positions of ministerial power, was a denial of political expression to the masses. It entailed the exclusion of a dynamic social reality from the state. According to Zehrer, a viable authoritarian regime had to be constructed not only from, to use Carl Schmitt's terms, auctoritas and potestas.⁶⁹ It also had to possess as its most dynamic element, the will of the people (Volkswille).⁷⁰ But in the coalition ministry a split had taken place between the bourgeois Nationalists who possessed governmental authority (Auctoritas) and the state's resources of physical force, the police and the Reichswehr (Potestas) while the will of the people was contained largely in the national-socialist movement. Die Tat's own connection with the northern wing of the Nazi party was enhanced by the appearance of Helmut Ellbrachter, close and influential friend of Gregor Strasser, on its editorial board. Zehrer's idea of the will of the people followed, despite his elitist sentiments, the political strategy of Strasser in trying to widen support for Nazism. Strasser's attempt to gain Nazi support both in middle-class and social democratic trade unions gained polemical support from Zehrer as a revolutionary endeavour which cut across class barriers. Given the revolutionary situation in Germany Zehrer in fact realised that if a revolution of the centre was on the cards, a purely middle-class revolution was impossible. The will of the people was a convenient catch-all for all forms of radical support among the economically underprivileged. Outside of the Nazi party, however, it had no meaning. When the Nazis withdrew from Papen's ministry and allowed Schleicher the opportunity of setting up his own ministry, his significant failure to gain Nazi support through Strasser, meant in fact that his own short-lived rule was

more vacuous than any of those which had preceded it.⁷¹ In Schleicher's failure to gain any mass support from any source and his success in alienating conservative opinion, Zehrer could see the fruits of his own contradictory revolutionary elitism. Possessing no respect for traditional notions of legitimacy and authority, revolutionary-nationalism remained isolated from the masses which it saw both as revolutionary and contemptible.

Zehrer's contradictory attitude towards Nazism remained to the end. They provided the exclusive key for his desire for a dynamic state which would satisfy "the people's will to revolution".⁷² Yet the price of a national-socialist Germany was not one he was prepared to pay for the fulfillment of such a desire. If the state had to break out of its fossilized political shell into social reality, the masses equally had to break the cast-iron grip of party politics and organisation. Zehrer claimed that the Nazi party had gone the way of the S.P.D. and K.P.D. and become a brutal and stultifying political machine which constrained the undoubtedly revolutionary social forces within the movement. The Nazi movement was the most advanced social revolutionary movement in Germany at that time, but its methods drastically hindered its revolutionary potential. "National-socialism.... what that phenomenon which had advanced furthest towards the comprehension of the new reality."⁷³ But as a party it had accepted "the old reality of elections and parliament". In what aspect of the movement did Zehrer see the most advanced expression of a new social reality? He saw it in "the armies of the S.A. and the S.S." Provisionally thought of as fighting and defence organisations to protect the party's liberal parliamentary methods, according to Zehrer, the private armies which future generations were to look on with fear and hatred "contain within themselves the possibilities of creating a new reality, should the methods of the old reality be rejected or come to no purpose". Prophetic in a way which he would have regarded as utterly misfortunate, Zehrer nonetheless

managed to reveal his simultaneous attraction and repulsion for mass behaviour. In either its mechanical obedience to party hierarchies or in its undisciplined anarchy it was unacceptable. When transformed into quasi-independent organisations which practised a disciplined violence it had its revolutionary fascinations. What Zehrer was not to see was that the very same private armies he admired were instrumental in executing the totalitarian policy of Gleichschaltung which destroyed for ever his idea of an authoritarian state based on a coalition of like-minded utopians under the leadership of a Prussian general.

Under the Nazi regime it soon became clear to Zehrer that there was no room for Die Tat as an independent and critical voice. While the other members of the editorial board compromised with the party, Zehrer felt unable to follow them. Ferdinand Fried abandoning the idea of autarchy, became an S.S. officer in his capacity as an assistant to Walther Darré, the Reich Minister of Agriculture. Eschmann and Wirsing continued editing the magazine for four years before it finally lapsed into silence as an independent supporter of the party, whose non-party nature had made it superfluous. Zehrer went into internal exile on the island of Sylt in the North Sea. The revolutionary intelligentsia's hour of glory was over. The illusion of making history, provided by courtesy of the Weimar Republic, exploded in its face. The choice now was to join or not to join. Either choice in effect meant silence.

Knowledge and Power

The utopianism of Die Tat was not merely an intellectual aspiration betrayed by the course of historical events. It was from the outset a value-attitude flawed by its attachment to the ideal of an authoritarian state. The utopianism of the sociology of knowledge was similarly suspect. As Hans Barth has pointed out, its inspiration lies not only with Marx's critique of ideology but also with Nietzsche's bio-social

critique of power and Spengler's historical morphology.⁷⁴ Beneath Spengler's assertion that knowledge could no longer be considered true or false but merely deep or shallow (tief oder flach)⁷⁵ emerged the new irrationalist impulses of a widespread cultural despair. The sociology of knowledge suffered both from the rationalist excesses of the Marxist view espoused by Lukacs that Utopian thinking was the exclusive property of a rationally cognitive class-conscious proletariat. It also suffered from the Nietzschean vitalism through which Scheler, Seidel and Freyer indiscriminately attempted to cast aside the rationalistic and materialistic constraints of the modern technological world. Mannheim's insistence on the being-rootedness of knowledge was an attempt to pitch the problem of cognition at such a general level that the alternatives of irrationalist or super-rationalist excess were no longer problematic. His option for a value-free intelligentsia was cast within a rationalist and humanist tradition. The communication of genuine forms of human understanding to men, could he thought, generate a universal ecstase, a going outside of oneself, a form of cultivated self-realisation in the fullest sense.⁷⁶ This in fact was what lay behind his idea of the democratization of culture. It was based on what Ernst Bloch had called "the principle of hope".

The Tat circle however belonged to a new intellectual tradition in European social thought which had abdicated the principle of hope. The cynicism, the disillusionment and the impatience with all democratic processes which pervade the work of Pareto and Sorel are synthetically blended with a utopianism cut adrift from its humanist suppositions. It becomes a travesty of the whole idea of historical progress, and its attitude towards the masses betrays an amoral instrumentalism characteristic of the phenomenon Julien Benda was to call the "Trahison des cleres." In socialist parties this had also happened. - through the growth towards oligarchy in social democratic parties and in communist parties with the conscious statement of principle by Lenin

that the party must be an elitist vanguard of the proletariat. Zehrer's demand for a revolution of the centre was in many ways a re-active imitation of the control gained by the communist party over the working-classes. It was also one of the most explicit statements of middle-class partisanship to be found in the intellectual history of fascism. While bourgeois Marxists attempted to retain their humanist aspirations by 'supporting' the working-class, bourgeois fascists succeeded in renouncing theirs by supporting the impoverished middle-classes. Two diametrically opposed means had been found to destroy that tradition of bourgeois humanism which both extremes regarded as an anachronism of the nineteenth century.

The element of humanism in the division between extreme left and extreme right is perhaps one of the few decisive factors, in persuading us to retain this conceptual axis in the discussion of modern politics. In fact Zehrer while consciously producing a formula of middle-class revolution admitted what Hitler and Mussolini instinctively knew, that its sociological efficacy depended on a more general appeal to the nation. The dissimulations which resulted arose out of a fundamental fascist contempt for the masses, even those who could become revolutionary, and a belief that men generally were too fickle to act in their own interest when confronted with a strictly realistic account of their historical situation. They only responded to political myth. To tell the middle-class they were carrying out a revolution of the centre was politically useless. To tell them they were acting on behalf of their nation was absolutely fundamental. For the Tat circle and their post-materialist sociology this raised some fundamental questions about their attitude to the acquisition of knowledge. They acquired the contemporary vocabulary of the social sciences and its analytical claims to scientific validity. But in political life, especially during periods of political crisis, sociological knowledge merely served as a strategic consideration in the

process of revolutionary mobilisation. Outside of its mythical efficacy, its importance was nil. Knowledge merely had an instrumental political function, and its autonomy or validity was a matter of indifference.

Hans Freyer saw sociology too as a science of the pre-revolutionary world. It contributed to the structural analysis of industrial society and the prospects of revolutionary transition. But the agent of that revolutionary transition, the people is unamenable to sociological analysis. Not only does it abolish industrial society but also the scientism which conceives of life as 'social'. Before the vital and dynamic onrush of the Volk, 'Society' the abstraction of a decaying bourgeois world is dissolved. The practical consequences of Freyer's attitude became apparent when he joined the Nazi party, and became one of the leading academic intellectuals to give his support to the seizure of power. His official party standing also enabled him to liquidate the Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Soziologie against the wishes of Leopold von Wiese and so wipe out the institutional status of sociology as a critical intellectual discipline.⁷⁷

Mannheim's Wissensoziologie had consequences which, as an intellectual casualty of Nazism, he could only have despised. Yet despite his own explicit condemnation of fascism, his utopianism became used by fascist social thinkers. His attempt to combine Nietzschean vitalism and Marxian epistemology was a failure. Out of that failure an esoteric attraction to fascism was born. The humanitarian and cosmopolitanism of Germany's left-wing intellectuals, the stalwarts of Weltbuehne and Tagebuch, Kurt Hiller, Leopold Schwarzschild, Kurt Tucholsky and Carl von Ossietzky was regarded with contempt.⁷⁸ The Tat circle looked upon it as a form of effete intellectualism whose negative and internationalist orientation had removed it from the concrete problems of Germany. The peculiar and eclectic utopianism of Mannheim's in which voluntaristic

elitism seemed to thrive side by side with the dynamics of revolutionary social change, and which lent it to the more cynical speculations of Sorel and Pareto, also helped to nurture the notion that humanity was dispensable to the concern of real power. The Tat circle combined a fashionable concern for the tradition of the new with an utter contempt for universal ideals. In their work as in fascist social theory generally the humanist belief in enlightenment and reason were dead.

The paradox was that their short-lived intellectual success was due to genuinely inventive and original ideas. They lacked nothing in self-confidence or ingenuity. The journalistic experience of Fried and Zehrer put their polemics on a par with those of Weltbuehne. Their capacity for ad hoc innovation made them superior to the latter's largely negative and destructive criticism. They may have lacked the intellectual sophistication of the new Frankfurt School of Sociology with its Freudian versions of Marxism. But they also avoided its convoluted obscurity. While the fault of the left during this period was that it had the right values but few new or clear ideas, the fascist intellectuals thrived on new ideas precisely because of the feeling of elation which followed its abdication of humanitarian values. For that elation came from the illusion of a definite break with the past. In their partisan support for German nationalism the Tat circle were constrained by a fundamentally conservative commitment. The polemical use of the social science language however offered them a whole conceptual apparatus of futurism and modernity. They may not have escaped from a whole web of assumptions involved in the traditional Germanic servility to the authoritarian state. In their iconoclastic and ideological use of language, their powers of concealing this fact were quite formidable.

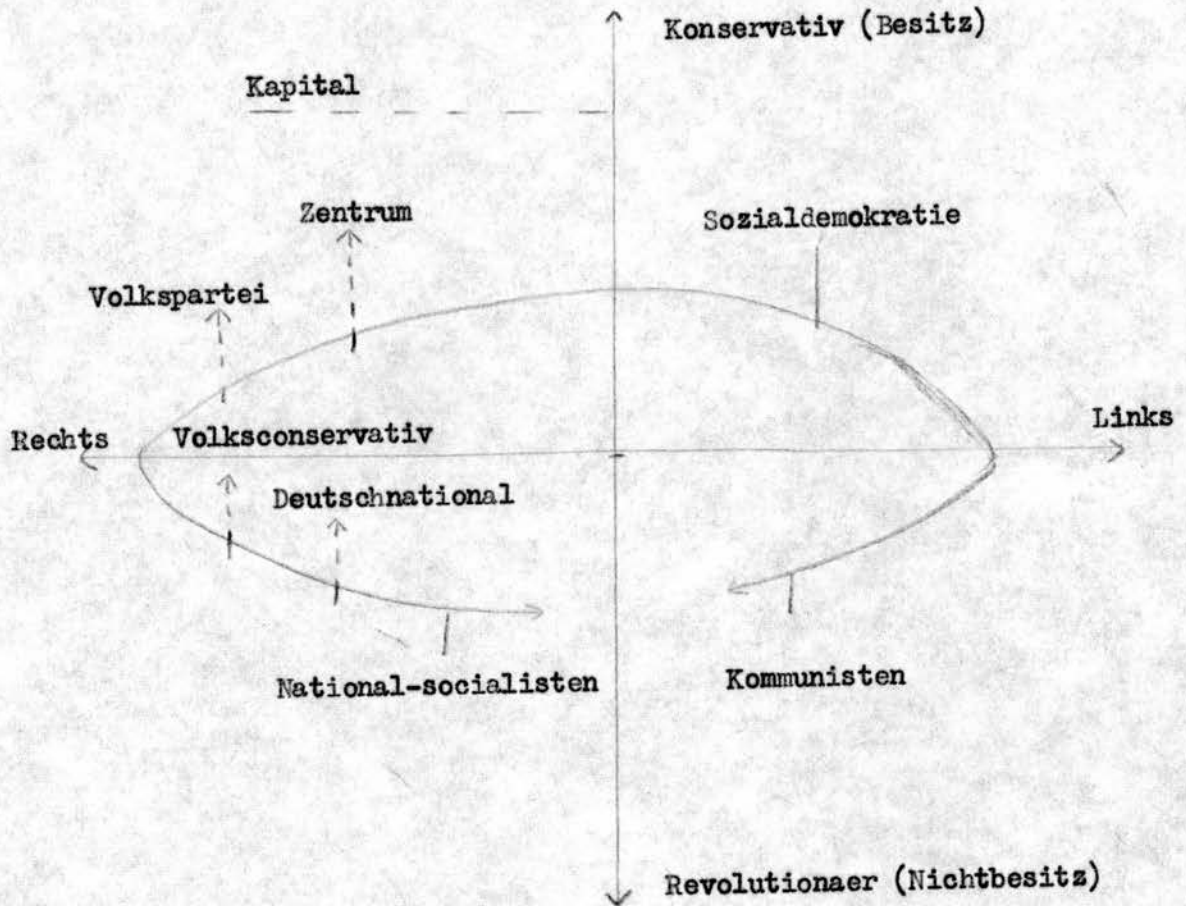
CHAPTER VIINotes

1. See the essays of Kurt Sontheimer: "Der Tat-Kreis" in Gotthard Jasper ed. Von Weimar zu Hitler 1930-1933 pp 197-229 and Walter Struve: "Hans Zehrer as a neo-conservative elite theorist" American Historical Review vol. 70 1964-65 pp 1035-1057
2. Sontheimer p.199
3. Struve op.cit. footnote p.1045
4. Sontheimer op.cit. p. 200
5. Curtius. op.cit. p.36
6. ibid. p.36
7. Zehrer often signed his articles with the name "Hans Thomas" while Eschmann used the "Leopold Dingraeve". Ferdinand Fried seldom if ever wrote under his real name, Leopold Zimmerman, and many articles were simply anonymous.
8. Curtius op.cit. p.43
9. "Das Ende der Wissenschaft. Krisis....Krisis!" Tat XXII 1930 p.596ff.
10. ibid. p.602
11. "Moderne Soziologen: Vilfredo Pareto" ibid. p.771ff. The series also contained essays on George Sorel and Rudolf Smend. Eschmann intended a German translation of Trattoria di sociologia, but it apparently never materialised.
12. For a discussion of Kautsky's role in the development of the S.P.D. see George Lichtheim Marxism p.259ff.
13. Kautsky's final work Die Materialistische Gesichtsauffassung, a long and leaden account of economic determinism was published in 1927 and criticised by Korsch in 1929, the year that Zehrer started to edit Die Tat; cf. Karl Korsch Die Materialistische Geschichtsauffassung. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Karl Kautsky.
14. "Rechts oder Links" Tat Vol. XXIII 1931 p.536.
15. "Die Revolution der Intelligenz" Tat Vol. XXII 1929-30 p.488ff.
16. Zehrer op.cit. p.493-494.
17. See Eschmann "Pareto" op.cit. p.779. Eschmann's excessively voluntaristic account of Pareto's theory underestimates the essentially mechanistic nature of his model of social change.
18. ibid. p.496
19. ibid. p.493

20. The Psychology of Socialism, pp.497,508 (trans. from 2nd German edition Jena 1927).
21. Zehrer, op.cit., p.497.
22. "Rechts oder Links", p.535.
23. Emil Lederer and Jakob Marschak Der Neue Mittelstand in Grundriss der Sozialoekonomik, vol. IX. Tubingen 1926.
24. Siegfried Kracauer From Caligari to Hitler, p.158ff.
25. Published in 1930 in book form as Die Angestellte
26. *ibid.* p.83. Kracauer's approach to the subject was in many ways the forerunner of C. Wright Mills' classic study of the early fifties White Collar.
27. Die Tat, vol. XXII 1930-31, pp.460-463
28. Zehrer, op.cit., p.502.
29. *ibid.* p.503. Zehrer cites figures showing a 10% decline in manual occupations in German society between 1895 and 1925, while at the same time there was a substantial growth in the rank of the self-employed. Within the "employee stratum" there was an increase from 1.5 million in 1907 to 3.32 million in 1928. See also David Schoenbaum Hitler's social revolution, Chap.I.
30. "Revolution der Intelligenz" pp.498-499. Zehrer bases this dubious assumption on statistical evidence showing that 62% (sic) of students attending institutions of higher education in Prussia in 1926-27 were from the middle-classes as he had previously defined them.
31. "Akademisches Proletariat; 137000 Menschen wollen 'Doktor' werden". Die Tat, 1930 pp.816-823.
32. Karl Mannheim Man and Society in an Age of Crisis, p.14
33. R. Samuel and H. Thomas Education and Society in modern Germany, p.82 The number of students in German universities increased from 60,458 in 1925 to 95,807 in 1931. Under the Nazi regime it declined fairly rapidly to 48,458 by 1936.
34. "Revolution der Intelligenz", p.502.
35. See the review of Freyer's Revolution von Rechts by Horst Grueneberg. Tat, vol. XXII 1930-31, p.240f. Grueneberg welcomes Freyer as a "fellow-fighter for revolution" but criticises his inability to see the forthcoming German revolution as a revolution of the centre.
36. The sociological locus classicus of the theory of the "fascism of the centre" is Theodor Geiger's book Die Sozial Schichtung des deutschen Volkes, published three years later than Zehrer's essay in 1932. see Dahrendorf op.cit.p.113f. For the most cogent restatement of the thesis in modern political sociology see S.M. Lipset Political Man, p.127ff.
37. See Heberle op.cit.; also the case study of political changes in a small town in Hanover by William Sheridan Allen The Nazi Seizure of Power. For a general summary see K. D. Bracher The German Dictatorship

(trans. by Jean Steinberg) p.152ff.

38. "Rechts oder Links" p. 531.
39. "Moderne Soziologen: 2. Georges Sorel" Vol. XXII 1931.
40. "Rechts oder Links" p.532
41. "Achtung, junge Front! Draussenbleiben!" Vol. XXI 1929 p. 26f.
42. See the analysis of party membership by Lerner, Pool and Schueller "The Nazi Elite" in H. Lasswell and D. Lerner ed World Revolutionary Elites pp 194-315. For student attitudes generally see Bracher op.cit. p.146 and Bleuel and Klinnert op.cit. p.162ff.
43. "Die Dritte Front" Vol. XXIII May 1932. p.97ff.
44. For the relation between Die Tat and Gregor Strasser see below chapter 12.
45. For a detailed discussion of Fried's doctrine of autarchy see Wolfgang Hoch Deutscher Anticapitalismus Frankfurt 1960 and Hermann Lebovics Social Conservatism and the German Middle Classes Princeton 1969 chapter 6.
46. "Capital und Masses" Vol. XXII 1930-31. p.768ff.
47. ibid. p.772
48. "Rechts oder Links" p. 552
49. Hans Thomas (pseud.) "Politik ohne Worte; der Kampf mit der Sprache". Vol. XXIII 1932-33 p.241
50. ibid. p.242
51. ibid. p.246
52. "Rechts oder Links" p.519
53. Carl Schmitt Der Geistigen Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus p.45f.
54. "Politik ohne Worte" p.251
55. ibid. p.253
56. ibid p. 254. Zehrer's diagrammatic characterisation of the elipsis indicating that revolution is again imminent is in terms of the German situation in 1932 as follows:



57. For Zehrer's retrospective assessment of national-socialism as the "silent guest" in the frenzied salon of national-revolutionary politics during the final years of the republic, cf. Ernst. von Salomon The Answers p.94ff.
58. Cf. Schmitt op.cit. p.45 For a discussion of Schmitt as an anti-democratic theorist in the purely political sense. cf Karl Sontheimer Anti-demokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik p.195f.
59. Mannheim op.cit. p.110
60. "Rechts oder Links" p.531ff.
61. cf. "Verfassung und Verfassungsrecht" (first published in 1928) in Staatsrechtliche Abhandlung Berlin 1955 p.120ff.
62. *ibid.* pp 136-138 cf. also Schluchter op.cit. 52-90 for an excellent account of Smend's integration theory.
63. *ibid.* p.167

64. Schluchter op.cit. p.89. It is interesting to note that one of Smend's most important adversaries, Herman Heller, was equally concerned with the problem of grounding the state in social reality, but unlike Smend saw parliamentary democracy as being capable of achieving this very object. see Schluchter pp.250-278.
65. Horst Grueneberg. "Zur Theorie des Antiparliamentarismus" Die Tat vol. XXII 1930-31, p.115.
66. For a fuller account of Zehrer's intrigue with Schleicher cf. Struve op.cit., p.1045ff and Sontheimer op.cit., p.214f.
67. For a discussion of Papen's ministry see K. D. Bracher Die Auflöesung der Weimarer Republik, p.601ff.
68. According to Hermann Rauschnung, this was the main reason for many conservatives, himself included, joining the Nazi Party, cf. Make or Break with the Nazis: Notes on a Conservative Revolution, p.45ff.
69. The distinction is made by Schmitt in Hueter der Verfassung (1932) p.135ff.
70. "Revolution oder Restauration" Tat August 1932 p.354f.
71. Bracher op.cit. p.707ff.
72. Zehrer, op.cit., p.365.
73. "Revolution oder Restauration", p.386.
74. Wahrheit und Ideologie, p.272
75. The Decline of the West, vol. I, p.415
76. "The Deomocratisation of culture" in Essays on the Sociology of Culture, p.239f.
77. R. Dahrendorf "Soziologie und Nationalsozialismus" in Andreas Flitiner Ed. Deutsches Geistesleben und Nationalsozialismus, p.79.
78. For an account of Germany's socialist intellectuals during this period see Kurt Hiller's autobiography Leben gegen die Zeit and Istvan Deak Weimar Germany's left-wing intellectuals Berkeley 1968.

CHAPTER VIIIThe Helmet and the Sickle

The problem which faced revolutionary-nationalism after the Freikorps era had drawn to a close was how to make front and Freikorps violence the mythical foundation of a new political doctrine. Their own predicament was similar to that encountered by Alfred Seidel at the level of epistemology, - the irrevocable feeling that nihilism could only be countered by nihilism. For bourgeois democracy with its instability, its lack of legitimacy and order, its decadence, was to their way of thinking nihilistic. The "nihilation of nihilism" was to use Seidel's phrase involved action which was even more drastically nihilistic than the alleged disease it was attempting to cure. The three main doctrinal strands of revolutionary-nationalism to be discussed in the following chapters - national-bolshevism, international nationalism, and total mobilisation are in this sense all nihilistic forms of the nihilation of nihilism. Seidel, who had no connections with nationalist circles nonetheless provided an uncannily accurate statement of its philosophical predicament. Unlike the Tat-circle who had embraced some form of authoritarian utopianism as a way out of the nihilist predicament, Carl Schmitt and Ernst Juenger, the most complex and sophisticated of the revolutionary-nationalist thinkers accepted without reservation the nihilistic predicament. As a consequence they transformed fascist doctrine into a vehicle of nihilistic totalitarianism which many of the most committed European fascist intellectuals would have found too extreme. The means by which this was done was also unacceptable - to invoke the Bolshevik experience in Russia as one of the crowning

examples of statist domination in the twentieth century.

This certainly was the premise of German national-bolshevism. But national-bolshevism went through two distinct phases in the Germany of the twenties. It is only in the second phase that revolutionary-nationalism, through the person of Ernst Niekisch, became centrally involved. The first phase emerged during the initial years of the Weimar Republic, when some political thinkers came to see in the violence of the Spartacists and the consequent counter-violence of the Freikorps the basis for all alliance, between extremes of the left and right, rather than as a symptom of a life-and-death struggle between socialism and nationalism. Two Hamburg 'national-communists' Heinrich Laufenberg and Fritz Wollheim argued that Freikorps nationalism could possess revolutionary potential if it was aligned to the class-struggle of its socialist enemies. They contacted Karl Radek, a Polish member of the Comintern who had played an important part in the Spartacist uprising and succeeded in convincing him that an alliance between nationalism and communism was possible.¹ In 1920 Radek returned to Moscow and put forward the idea that for the immediate future at least, the struggle of the German nation against the imperialist West should take priority over the international class struggle against capitalism. Lenin however rejected this national-bolshevism or what he called "left-wing communism" as a political absurdity. He claimed that Germany would have to accept the humiliations of the Versailles Treaty just as the Bolsheviks had accepted the terms of Brest-Litovsk. Liberation from the constraints of Versailles, he claimed, could only come internally through social revolution.²

Nonetheless Radek continued with his efforts to gain support among the German nationalists. There were some hopeful signs that

the union of political extremes he proposed could be partially realised. The Freikorps who fought against the Red army in the Baltic tended to accord the Bolsheviks a reluctant respect and Manfred Killinger, a Freikorps leader who became a leading member of Ehrhardt's terrorist Organisation Consul before going on to join the Nazis, often referred to his own men as "right-wing" bolsheviks.³ The real opportunity for dialogue came however in 1923 when the sudden entry of the French into the Ruhr gave the Freikorps and the local armed communist organisations the opportunity of a military liason against the invading 'imperialist' army. The Ruhr campaign provided the rationale of Radek's famous speech to the executive committee of the Comintern in June 1923. Here he identified the class-struggle in Germany almost completely with the German national struggle against Western Imperialism. The martyr of the struggle against the French, he claimed was not a communist but a Freikorps man, Leo Schlageter who was killed in action against the French. Schlageter epitomised the fate of the fighter uprooted from his moorings in post-war German society. He was, said Radek, using the title of a Freikorps novel of the time, "the wanderer into the void". The Radek line of stressing the revolutionary potential of the Freikorps was given approval by Zinoviev and officially endorsed by the party.⁴

Yet Radek's endeavours were short-lived. The theoretical debate on national-bolshevism between the communists and the nationalists showed quite clearly that the hiatus between them was unbridgeable. Radek took part in a discussion with Moeller van der Bruck and Count Ernst von Reventlow which occupied the pages of Moeller's magazine Der Gewissen. Moeller however effectively spurned Radek's overtures in a series of short articles in which he attacked the materialism of

Marxist doctrine, the unacceptable identification of the proletariat with the nation, and the inflexible commitment of the communists to the ideology of class-struggle.⁵ Moeller, adhering to the statist tradition of German political thought, found the ideological vocabulary of Marxism alien and unacceptable. This theoretical impasse was reinforced in the realms of practical politics by the communist uprisings of the same year in Hamburg and Saxony, where local communist leaders declared their open hostility to the parties of the right and to "bourgeois nationalism". From that time onwards although the German communist party maintained a substantial national appeal in its party programmes, especially in opposition to the Dawes plan of 1929, the dialogue with the extreme right was dead. With the growth of national-socialism, opposition to the dialogue was intensified. Peripheral leaders such as Heinz Neumann were prepared to make overtures to the radical northern wing of the Nazi party but these came to nothing. By the turn of the decade the formal doctrinaire concessions to nationalism in the party had been drowned in the overwhelming nationalist hysteria fomented by Nazi demagogues.

The second phase of national-bolshevism, starting just before the turn of the decade, and continuing until 1934 when it was belatedly subjected to Nazi persecution, emerged as a purely theoretical debate when the political omentum which encouraged it within Germany had finally died out. It was the doctrine of a small minority sect within revolutionary-nationalism whose political appeal was strictly limited. Its leader, Ernst Niekisch had, like Mussolini in Italy before him, turned towards nationalism from revolutionary socialism. Unlike Mussolini however, Niekisch retained many of his leftist

sentiments, notably his liking for bolshevism, but did so in ideological terms, which the Marxist left found both obtuse and untenable. Niekisch's strange volte-face was indirectly due to his own participation in the revolution of 1918. As a member of the U.S.P.D. the Independent German Socialist Party, Niekisch had played a leading role in the creation of the Bavarian Soviet Republic, in which he had been a minister, but was disillusioned by the anarchy, the improvisation and the disorganisation of the Soviets. The final fiasco of its disintegration and defeat at the hands of the Freikorps prompted him to direct himself to increasingly authoritarian forms of socialism. Disillusioned with the revisionist S.P.D. as well, he broke away from it in 1926 with a group of young socialists to found the Alte Sozialistische Partei.⁶ He started to edit a magazine Widerstand (Resistance) and in 1928 was joined by August Winnig, another ex-socialist revolutionary who had switched his allegiance to the nationalists at the time of the Kapp Putsch. It was through Niekisch that national-bolshevism became transformed from a code-word for the alliance of political extremes to a doctrine which Juenger was later to use in the creation of his model of a totalitarian state.

In his most important work published in 1930 Entscheidung Niekisch shows quite clearly that his liking for Soviet Russia comes not from his adherence to Marxism or revolutionary socialism but from the tendency to see the key differences in European society in terms of an East/West geopolitical axis. The reasons for the impasse between east and west were religious racial and geopolitical. According to Niekisch the "slavic-germanic racial mixture" of Eastern Europe provided the foundation for the Prussian political struggle

against Western urban civilisation on the one hand and the struggle of a North European Protestantism against the Holy Roman Empire on the other.⁷ The core conflict of modern European history was the struggle of the rural Protestant east against the urban Catholic West, of "creative primitive life" against "economically intoxicated civilisation" and "rural revolutionary conservatism" against "urban liberalism".

In this context the front-experience had been significant in two important respects. Defeat by the Allies had brought into Germany the corrupt urban-democratic life-styles of the West; but it had also intensified the German national awareness of its Prussian heritage. It was the former, however, which in the Germany of the twenties appeared to have won a temporary victory. Under the onslaught of urban mass culture and western capitalism Germany had become prey "to the values of the city". With the disintegration of the supra-individual norms associated with the authoritarian Prussian value-system, the desire for material self-aggrandisement and the acquisition of property reigned supreme. "Individualism and materialism", Niekisch commented, "are like Siamese twins. They were born at the same time and continue side by side on their indestructible path."⁸ "Urban-bourgeois man" is the non-hero, "the trader" and "his value-system is a price list". Niekisch regarded urbanisation in Germany after 1918 as a concrete manifestation of Western imperialism and the Weimar parliamentary system as one of the most "brutal forms of dictatorship by the Western nations". The German city was a corrupt and colonised world of wishdreams in which the German seeks refuge from the heroic and sacrificial tasks of Prussianism.

Against this temporary victory of Western colonialism and decadent urban culture, the front-experience had provided the true Prussian with a source of experience and hope. It had proved to him that "he invariably had to be ready for sacrifice, if he was not to be totally destroyed". The demands of the front, the readiness for service and sacrifice were a form of "moral achievement". They provided the ethical basis of both Prussianism and protestantism which expressed in political and theological terms respectively the binding nature of this ethic. Bismarck, Nietzsche and Dostoevsky are Niekisch's heroic resistance fighters against Western capitalist and Roman Catholic domination. He took up Dostoevsky's clarion call to Germany to assert its "eternal Protestantism, its eternal protest against Rome" which had originated in the rebellion of Arminius against the Roman legions.⁹ The political domination of the West and the development of Western capitalism is presented as a historically transformed and secularised continuation of two thousand years of Catholic theocratic rule in Europe. Against the liberal-catholic West the Prussian protestant resists through a life-style characterised by "drill". "Drilling is the way in which a whole nation, in order to attain its life-needs, cultivates asceticism."¹⁰ The militaristic features of the Prussian life-style are transformed into the moral virtues of German protestantism.

Apart from the front-experience, the other great event contributing to the possible renaissance of Prussia was the Russian Revolution and the rise of Bolshevism. Niekisch, having decisively broken with his leftist revolutionary past, does not see Bolshevism as the fruition of the Marxist doctrine of revolutionary class-struggle. For him Marx is of no importance. The author of Das Kapital is described as a

"revenge-seeking Jewish emigré". His sociological creation, the proletarian is castigated as a typical product of the west without inwardness, heroism or respect for authority. Russian bolshevism meant for Niekisch the destruction of Jewish-Marxist socialism of the West. It had rendered obsolete the westernised concepts of "socialism", "pacifism" and "the dictatorship of the proletariat". Finally it had asserted its truly Russian nature when it rid itself of the most despicable Jewish-Western epigone in Moscow, Leon Trotsky.¹¹ Niekisch's anti-Marxist interpretation of bolshevism illuminated quite clearly the significance of communism for the national-bolsheviks. Communism was counter-revolutionary. It had secularised the "eternal protestantism" of East against West outlined by Dostoevsky as the major task of a new Germany. It was not a socialist creed of egalitarianism and happiness but a moral creed of service and sacrifice. Its revolutionary origins made it in advance of western capitalism: at the same time it signified a revolt against the whole Western idea of progress. Marxism possessed a purely instrumental function as a propaganda weapon. "Communism is the counter-movement against the bourgeois world.... It does not use Marxist theory as an inviolable sacred doctrine, but in some cases as a mask, in others as a weapon."¹² Through Marxism, the communist movement had effectively concealed its conservative and authoritarian values behind a mask of revolutionary egalitarianism. As a doctrine of revolution, the protagonists of Marxism always had a ready-made opportunity for denouncing the west as reactionary, despite the fact that most of the features in Western societies they were opposed to were basically dynamic and progressive ones. By this ideological inversion the authentically conservative nature of bolshevism could be

immune from attack by Western liberalism as itself reactionary. Bolshevism had proved for Niekisch that a potential conservative lurked behind every revolutionary mask.

The implication for Germany was quite clear. A political movement adapting the bolshevik achievement to its own purposes could defend Prussian authoritarianism from a revolutionary standpoint. The attack on the urban-industrial west from a conservative standpoint could masquerade as revolutionary. Before he fully realised the full extent of industrialisation implied by the first Soviet five-year plan, Niekisch in fact provided a rural-feudalist rationale of the Drang nach Osten. From this traditionalist perspective, he stressed "morality, tradition and honour" as being the fundamental values of a Prussian feudal Germany. He went further and called for a resuscitation of the type of Prussian domination known as Gutsherrschaft which flourished under the Junker aristocracy. Clearly different from the Grundherrschaft of western Germany, where noble landlords rented out land to the peasantry, the Junker landlord not only kept the peasants economically subordinate to himself, but was responsible for political and military control of the area in which his manorial domain resided. According to Niekisch this was the only appropriate legitimate form of domination for Prussianism:

".... Only in the period when the Junker landlord was both an administrator and a warrior, could the agrarian state effectively maintain itself. The Junker landlord (Gutsherr) was at the same time an overlord, (Gefolgsheerr). His staunch loyalty to his subjects, rooted in the German character, became a formative political force. His Germanic domination became, to use Max Weber's phrase "a social institution". Prussia's social spirit revealed itself by virtue of the fact that the overlord was socially responsible for his subjects." 13

Niekisch eventually abandoned his Prussian rural-feudalism when the Soviet Union entered into a stage of massive industrialisation. Yet the model of Gutsherrschaft remained the key to his interpretation of Soviet industrialism. The party bosses and the managerial technocrats were the new overlords of the industrial world, incorporating the same principle of domination and the same 'social spirit'. Juenger's contention that "service" was the appropriate mode of action for both ruler and ruled is derived from this Prussian standpoint. Both he and Niekisch saw Russia as a technological Junkerdom where the spirit of a traditional form of domination could accompany modern technological invention in the fight against the West. Technology, in this conservative-revolutionary context, could be turned against its original inventors and their flaccid ideology of progress. Bolshevism was not Marxist, but Prussian. Their acclaim for the five year plans was inseparable from a nostalgia for feudalism. What Niekisch had done was to claim that the basis of German nationality resided in the most traditional, reactionary and agrarian sentiments mustered by the Prussian state. East Prussia the land of rural backwardness and of a patriarchal world which prevailed under the Prussian Junkers right into the period when Germany became an industrial nation is extolled as the model for German revolutionary-nationalism. Distant from the industrial Ruhr and Rhineland, and from the catholic south, religious values, political traditions and reactionary forms of feudal benevolence and reciprocity form a rural-protestant-prussian syndrome which looks eastward in the opposite direction from the historical expansion of the German nation to the west and south in the nineteenth century. For this expansion had brought the civilisational corruption, the penetration of a more

dynamic and changing universe, which during the war and immediately afterwards had shaken the old Prussian traditions to the core. Ostensibly nationalistic, Niekisch's national-bolshevism with its vision of a Russian-German condominium extending from the Rhine to Vladivostock entailed a destruction of nineteenth century conceptions of nationality and the nation-state. It paved the way instead for Juenger's vision in Der Arbeiter of global technological domination. Revolutionary nationalism thus provided a Prussian mandate for a dynamic conservative imperialism, which Juenger in his work used as a springboard for the destruction of all forms of tradition.

The conservative outlook of Niekisch also reflected the paradox which many writers claimed to detect in the growth of German nationality. It was Prussia which had by and large been historically responsible for German unification. According to Max Weber Prussian Junkerdom had been the breeding ground of the military discipline necessary for the creation of a German-nation state. Yet with the establishment of the Second Reich and the growth of industrialization, the East becomes the servant of the South and West with "their overpowering capital".¹⁴ The commercialisation of the landed estates in the East and the development of capitalist rationality in industrial Germany had eroded both the Prussian values and the social strata so crucial to the founding of the German Reich. For Weber the process of capitalist rationalization was irreversible. Labour migration to the West, he thought, would destroy the structure and spirit of Prussian agrarianism for good. Niekisch however wished to restore that same vanishing patriarchal and martial spirit to German life which Weber saw in the throes of inevitable dissolution. The key

to the process for the national-bolsheviks came in the construction of an industrial system which Weber, arguably, never really envisaged - a rational-technological system which was the complete antithesis of western capitalism. Soviet Russia provided a totalitarian system of industrialisation which was unaccountable for both in terms of Weber's analysis of capitalist rationality in the economic sense and his analysis of its complement in the political sphere legal-rational domination. Juenger's own vision, an industrial technological state was to join both martial and Prussian-authoritarian values with modern organisational rationality, while at the same time mounting a total and unconditional offensive both against Western capitalism and legal-rational domination. The point of difference was unequivocally clear. While Weber had regarded protestantism and Calvinism in particular as the incubator of values necessary to the development of a systematic and rational capitalism and therefore clearly distinct from Prussianism, for Niekisch Prussianism and protestantism were almost identical. Protestant asceticism and pietism complemented the martial values of the Prussian state. It was the kernel of resistance to the west and of the Drang nach Osten. The bolschevist posture was the geopolitical consummation of this resistance. German nationalism through its Prussian adherents had been totally severed from the factual and historical reality of German nationhood. The Soviet Union had been called on to save Prussia from its own creation.

The political impact of Niekisch's doctrine was marginal. His own following scarcely numbered more than four thousand and his major political conversion betrayed a minor sort of historical irony. In 1929 a large section of the Bund Oberland, a civilian re-organisation of the Oberland Freikorp went over to national-bolshevism. Historically this was a symbolic catch for Niekisch for this group played a role in Hitler's Munich Putsch of 1923 as well as earlier part in the

destruction of the 1918 revolution. Niekisch had joined hands with his former enemies and enticed them away from the Bavarian and "Romish" national-socialist movement. He had done so however at a time when the Freikorps had long been dead and the violent putschist tactics with which they had been associated, no longer played an important part in German politics. From Hitler's point of view, with the growing electoral successes and the appearance of more and more young post-war stormtroopers on the streets and the defection of old allies was politically harmless. Niekisch's circle was in political terms reduced to competing for pride of place among the national-revolutionary sects placed in the shadow of the communists and the Nazis.

International Nationalism.

While Niekisch had been the front-fighter as the embodiment of the heroic asceticism of the Prussian-protestant spirit who gave renewed impetus to the attack on western civilisation with the aid of bolshevism, the group of nationalists with whom Juenger was closely connected between 1926 and 1929 saw the front-fighter in more universal terms. Niekisch's work could have aptly been retitled "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Bolshevism"; the work of the leading international nationalists, Frederic Hielscher and Franz Schauwecker was distinctly anti-bolshevist in tone. Their own preference was for an even more speculative and phantasmogorical alliance than that of Niekisch - a vision of the metaphysical unity of Germany and the under-developed colonial nations of the world. What was astonishing about this position was the clear acceptance of a racial cosmopolitanism which it implied. While the Nazis were infuriated by Niekisch's

pro-bolshevist stand, Hielscher's identification with the coloured colonialists of the world and his acclaim of oriental culture was even more unacceptable. Even in national-bolshevism there were certain implicit racial assumptions in its geopolitical outlook. Niekisch's Russo-German empire was all-white. It deliberately excluded coloured populations.¹⁵ While the west would be left to deal with its insuperable problems of extinguishing colonial black insurgency, the national-bolshevist empire by having no colour problem would willingly shed one of the main bugbears of permanent imperial domination. Hielscher's vision of a new German Reich was one in which Germany itself was the spiritual and political head of the revolt of the Third world against its western colonial masters. In this context his interpretation of the front-experience was widely different from that of Niekisch. Whereas Niekisch saw it as creating the basis for new self-awareness by the German nation of its Prussian heritage, Hielscher saw it as providing a new form of spiritual experience in fighting that would be universal to all fighting against the west in the modern world. The front-experience was the beginning and embodiment of liberation from colonialism which possessed global dimensions.

How was it possible that on the soil of German nationalism with its strongly racial and chauvinist overtones, that such a political metaphysic could ever thrive? To some extent the answer lies in Hielscher's own favourable position within the national-revolutionary minority in the late twenties. As a member of the post-war generation, a student Freikorps volunteer who had graduated in law from Jena University, he had established contact with nationalist circles in Berlin through membership of Niekisch's Alte Sozialistische Partei

and his earlier acquaintanceship of August Winnig.¹⁶ The growth of the New Nationalists as the revolutionary-nationalists were first called in 1926, came about through its uneasy and hostile relations with the Stahlhelm, the para-military front-fighters organisation which had strong links with the D.N.V.P. the German nationalist party. Under the leadership of Franz Seldte, the Stahlhelm, the first official league of ex-front fighters had been quick to establish itself during the stabilization period of the republic, as violent opponents of the left-wing parties. In 1926 its membership was well over a million and on May Day, 1927, over 130,000 members participated in a massive para-military demonstration in Berlin. It was on the fringes of the Stahlhelm that the front-literati the Juenger brothers and Franz Schauwecker joined forces with the remnants of Ehrhardt's terrorist organisation Organisation Consul. With Ehrhardt's financial backing they set up an opposition magazine within the Stahlhelm called Die Standarte which was banned when it published an article praising the assassins of Rathenau and Erzberger and outraged local social-democrat politicians in Magdeburg where it was published.

Juenger and his circle then broke with the Stahlhelm.

Ehrhardt whose ex-terrorists were now organised into the quasi-respectable Viking Bund agreed in 1927 to put up money for a new magazine Vormarsch (Advance) under the editorship of Juenger and Werner Lass. In Berlin Hielscher, hit by graduate unemployment on leaving university and experiencing the deprivations of the academic proletariat, gratefully accepted the chance of editing the magazine in June 1928. In its new format the magazine under Hielscher's editorship came to identify its

own "advance" with the advance of the insurgent colonial peoples of the world. An important precedent for Hielscher's position was set a year previously in 1927 at the first congress of the League against Imperialism and for National Independence at Brussels. The formation of the League was the brainchild of Willi Muenzenberger, the most ideologically flexible and politically adept leader of the German Communist Party, who possessed a remarkable flair for the stage-management of campaigns of left-wing protest in Germany and Europe during the twenties.¹⁷ Members of the League included European socialists and communists and representatives of anti-imperialist movements in the Third-World. Unfortunately the links between European communism and Third World nationalism which Muenzenberger wanted to intensify were undermined and outstripped by political events. The breakdown of relations between the Kuomintang and the communists in China, regarded at the time as the most militantly aggressive anti-imperialist nation in the Third World, brought about a split between international communists and revolutionary-nationalists. At a second meeting of the League in Berlin, the Kuomintang was declared counter-revolutionary and expelled from further participation in the League's affairs. Hielscher, who attended both conferences, at once took the side of the Chinese nationalists against the communists. He met and befriended a number of Chinese students who shared his intensely nationalist hatred of communism and pacifism alike.¹⁸ The doctrine of national liberation through violence was completely to his liking and further encounters with Arab and Indian nationalists in Berlin as well as with the Chinese prompted him to see in the predicament of these countries a fate similar to that of Germany - that of a violent nationalism fighting imperialism and being undermined

in its struggle by the tactical manoeuvring and the materialist ideology of the communists. He also saw in these embryonic nationalist movements a form of conservative revolution in which the fight for independence meant a return to a traditional indigenous culture destroyed by western colonial powers.

In His book Das Reich published in 1931, proceeded to set out what can only be called the historical-metaphysical and geopolitical-metaphysical antecedents of a German world-empire based superficially at least on the idea of an international nationalism. Hielscher's closest supporter for this idea, to which incidentally Juenger himself was largely non-committal, was Franz Schauwecker. Schauwecker had spoken in his book So ist der Friede of a "world-revolution of nationalism" in the twentieth century inaugurated by the first world war.¹⁹ Thus the fascist para-military organisations of post-war Europe - the Freikorps, the Italian squadristi, and the Austrian Heimwehr are identified with the insurgent anti-colonial armies of Kemal Pasha (Ataturk) in Turkey and Chiang Kai-Shek in China. Schauwecker identified the future anti-colonial armies of the Third World as being similar both in organisation and life-style to those of European fascism. Hielscher took this affinity one step further by suggesting it exemplified the global significance of the specifically German front-experience. For the first time the spiritual qualities which had recurrently manifested themselves in the historical growth of the German nation could spread like an unquenchable fire across the face of the earth.

Of all the revolutionary-nationalists, Hielscher is without doubt in his thought as well as his style the nearest to the German

ideal of the Kultur Mensch. He speaks almost alone for the virtues of German Innerlichkeit. Yet inwardness according to Hielscher only blossoms under the external conditions of a strong and powerful martial state. In German history it is the Prussian statist tradition which is the sole guarantor of the superiority of German culture. The alliance of inwardness and power is a unity of opposites. The development of the protestant mysticism and inwardness of Eckhart and Luther goes hand-in-glove with the military slaughters of Gustav Adolphus in the Thirty Years War. The Age of Goethe is also the age of the supreme Prussian Frederick the Great. Nietzsche's philosophical greatness is shadowed by the ruthless Prussian Realpolitik of the founder of the Second Reich. Like Moeller van der Bruck, Hielscher's insistence on the recurrent resurgence of German greatness is governed by the Nietzschean conception of the eternal recurrence. For Hielscher the alliance of inwardness and power continually repeats itself throughout the course of German history. The significance of the front-experience is that the same eternal recurrence which had shaped the growth of the German Reich can take place on the plane of world-history. To make his argument convincing he has to radically devalue the status of Germany as a sovereign western European industrial nation. Hielscher presents Weimar Germany as a defeated power, whose status is that of a colonial nation. Germany's defeat in the war, albeit the defeat of a sovereign industrial nation in a war of materiel, he claims affirms Germany's colonial status. Despite its industrial political development and its official political sovereignty "Germany is the miracle of the west. It repays what the West invests. It is subsidiary territory." 20

After the military weapons of the war come the West's economic weapons of peacetime. "Not only tanks, gasbombs and submarines belong to the west's arsenal of weapons but just as important, commodities, banks and business deals." Capitalist materialism had overrun the Prussian sovereignty of Germany and destroyed the classic legacy of German culture in the same way as it had destroyed and enslaved the nations of the Third World.

Germany was joined to the Third World not by political alliance or by virtue of similar social organisation but by the common fate of exploitation by the west. That Germany had its own history of military expansion, imperial designs and indigenous industrialization were facts which Hielscher either had to contend firecely or ignore. In no sense could Germany of the Weimar republic be regarded as in a similar social or political situation to French or British colonies. The nearest analogy Hielscher could find was agrarian China, which he claimed was threatened by the great world-powers of the East-Russia and Japan, in the same way that Germany was threatened by the three Western world-powers France, the United States and Britain.²¹

Chinese nationalism had an analogous role in Asian politics as German nationalism in European politics. The successful uprising in Shanghai in 1927 organised by the Kuomintang and their subsequent decimation of their former communist allies, led Hielscher to believe that a new militaristic nationalism in the East could complement that of the West. But in practical terms, there was little basis for historical affinity. Hielscher therefore hinged his argument on suggesting a metaphysical affinity. The German front-fighter had undergone a unique experience,

similar according to Hielscher to the process of artistic creation, which could become the basis of a new soul-brotherhood (seelische Gemeinsamkeit) of warriors fighting imperialism throughout the world. What the front-experience had exclusively produced in the modern world was the feeling of "we". It was a new form of "wordless experience" which "had not yet acquired its real language". It was a "knowledge which was ashamed of itself when it sought out words and spoke of "destiny" comradeship and duty. But it was there. That was enough. Whoever stood in its secret brotherhood, invariably pursued the slaughter of war."²² The notion that the future colonial wars of the Third World not only would embody but also would be dependent on the German front-experience was little more than wishful thinking. It represented a political romanticism permeated by unsupportable fantasy. What also became unsupportable was the contention that the First world war with its trench warfare and large set-piece military encounters would have much in common with the flexible and ubiquitous tactics of rural guerilla warfare. As it turned out the static slaughter of the Western front and the rural base strategies of the Asian guerilla movements such as the Chinese Communists and the Vietminh came to represent the antithetical poles of warfare in the twentieth century.

The geopolitical universalisation of the front-experience, did represent, however, a kind of solution to the problem of front-nihilism and the claustrophobia of world-isolation in German nationalism. The very desperation of Hielscher's solution is shown by its political unreality. It is almost as if he wished to attribute the cause of the embryonic revolt against Western colonialism in the

Third World to the West's defeat of Germany. Colonial insurgency is regarded as the form of revenge that Germany metaphysically wills upon its Western humiliators. Opposition to the West is the convenient yardstick of negative affinity linking nationalist Germany to the Third World. Yet the very fascistic qualities which Hielscher admired most in the Third World were the ones which, like those in Europe, ultimately met with disaster. The Kuomintang with its authoritarian and militaristic regime failed to achieve the alliance of the helmet and the sickle necessary to ensure support from the Chinese peasantry. It was ultimately destroyed by a communist movement with a peasant army. Hielscher's indiscriminate cultivation of practically all Asian nations also lead him into political contradictions. He came to extol the virtues of Gandhi's "passive resistance" in India side by side with the militarism of the Kuomintang. And in the pages of Vormarsch and later Das Reich the magazine he started to edit in 1930, he placed almost side by side articles by Chinese nationalists and Japanese professors supporting the emperor Hirohito, at a time when relations between China and Japan had reached boiling point.²³

Hielscher's historical analysis of Asian and Arabic cultures, compared with Spengler's morphology of world-cultures by which he was undoubtedly influenced, was in many ways superficial and depthless. Hielscher took such modern nationalist leaders and spokesmen as Sun-Yat-Sen, Gandhi and Ib'n Saud as the political embodiment of the classic cultures of their nation. He saw the renaissance of classical culture emerging with the resurgent national consciousness of the anti-colonialist leaders. Spengler himself however was much

more sceptical and went to the opposite extreme. When on a visit to the elder man in the summer of 1926, Hielscher demanded to know his opinion in the matter, Spengler said of Sun-Yat-Sen, Gandhi and I'bn Saud "They are nothing but Fellaheen, jumped up, artistically speaking by the newspapers and historically speaking of no significance."²⁴ Hielscher pressed on regardless. Much more than a world-wide awakening of national cultures, national liberation was merely a prelude to the intermingling of these cultures. The epicentre of the vast global intermingling of these cultural forms would be the German Reich. It would become the vast repository of vital cultures of the world which remained uncorrupted by western decadence.

Within Germany, the centre of the metaphysical Reich lies in the heart of foreign territory - in the colonial decadent world-city of Berlin. Anonymous and corrupt, anomic and atomising, the new urban habitat of the revolutionary-nationalists was a "witches cauldron". "Berlin", said Hielscher, "is merely the continuation of the war by other means." Yet within the precincts of this westernized city lies the invisible protestant kingdom of the Reich. Here the uncontaminated non-westernized world is represented in microcosm and all the struggles of the world are contained within it. "There are no possibilities which elude Berlin. Here countries from all over the world mix and collide. Here things which will have taken years in forming, will be won and lost in a moment. Here the great transformation take place."²⁵ The alienated warriors of the front, no longer nihilistic have the power to transform Berlin into the new Jerusalem of the world. The imperialist mechinations of all the great world-powers will founder on the rock of Germany.

All the colonial people of the world will crave its aid and benediction and follow its destiny. Germany becomes in Hielscher's eyes a geopolitical wishdream, a global panacea to allay the sufferings of the world.

"The decision upon which everyone waits lies in the domain of Germany. French foreign policy is unable to deal with North Africa. In order to remain on equal terms with Britain and America it needs ascendancy over Europe and therefore over Germany.... Great Britain must besiege Russia to contain its power. As a hinterland from which to advance against Russia it needs - Germany. The United States must create new markets if it is not to stagnate. Russia is closed for that purpose. In spite of its ties with London it needs a European base convenient for its purposes. America must have - Germany. Japan can only survive in the long run against Great Britain and America if the great Eurasian hinterland protects it in the rear. In this hinterland it needs.... Germany.

"The colonial peoples of the world can have no satisfactory alliance with Russia because in all their joint activities the spectre of communist doctrine is dragged in; there is only one country whose stormtroops have shown as uninterrupted effort to attain freedom - Germany.... An encircled Russia has only one real outlet where it can escape the ring around its territories. On this outlet the future of Moscow and its policies depends: Germany. At present the question of our internal and external destiny have become linked. We have to hold out our hands to all the cultures of the world. We have to let them drink our blood. In us they encounter each other. The decision is ours." 26

Hielscher's geopolitical delusions are intended to lead the successors of the German front-fighter along the metaphysical road to world-domination. There is no question of the new Reich being an equal consortium of oppressed nations. Germany was an industrial nation which in that very war in which had been defeated had already laid its claim to being a world-power. As an authoritarian state it exercised oppressive forms of domination over its own people similar to those exercised by the democratic nations over their colonies. Hielscher's Germany could only overcome

the double-standards of the western colonists by universalising the standards they possessed abroad rather than the standards they possessed at home. The paternalistic authoritarian Prussian spirit, historically deprived of its colonial opportunities yet steeped in the adulation of repressive violence so necessary to colonialism, was steered by Hielscher along metaphysical paths to achieve that type of "world-domination" (Erdherrschaft) which it had been unable to achieve by historical or political means. The grandiose alternative to western materialist colonialism was German metaphysical colonialism. History however was to provide more alternatives. The anti-cosmopolitan and racial master of the Third Reich thought differently. Deprived of the opportunity of setting up a colonial empire among the coloured peoples of the world, Hitler had already decided to colonise Europeans. Likewise Japan the only Asian industrial nation, decided to colonise Asians. Stalin had already taken the process one step further by deciding to leave the world alone and colonise his own country. Compared with such abominations Hielscher's metaphysical colonialism was a romantic and despairing cri de coeur. It was a last hopeless and insane plea for a lost Germany to obtain through metaphysics what it had been unable to gain through conquest. It was a paradoxical demand for an international soul brotherhood of fascist warriors ruled by Germany. What from a humanist standpoint was a false and synthetic unity of incompatible opposites - of classic culture and martial power, of mass slaughter and artistic experience, of spiritual inwardness and the authoritarian state - became the groundwork for a strange parable of hopeless redemption never to be consummated.

The Peasant's Movement

National-bolshevism and international nationalism both held out the promise of an alliance between the peasant and the front-fighter,

between the helmet and the sickle. Niekisch saw this coming into being with the turn towards the rural-revolutionary East, Hielscher with the turn towards the colonial nations of the underdeveloped world. In terms of practical politics, both notions were excessively utopian. The real alliance of the helmet and the sickle occurred much closer at home in a different and more unpredictable way - through the campaign and agitation of the revolutionary-nationalists in the Peasant's Movement in Schleswig-Holstein. The initial involvement in Schleswig-Holstein came from a handful of revolutionary-nationalists but soon became the cause of the movement as a whole. It was Bruno von Salomon, the brother of Ernst, and Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz, formerly of Ehrhardt's O.C. and in 1928 as S.A. leader in Hamburg who first took up the peasant's cause. The movement had originated as a protest against adverse economic conditions for small farmers in the area and lack of government financial support. Poor prices for produce, depletion of capital, large-scale indebtedness because of the difficulty of obtaining favourable interest rates on loans, acted as a stimulus for the small peasants to demand nationalisation of banks and credit organisations.²⁷ Both Salomon and Heinz became critical of the Nazi party which they thought was dragging its heels on the question of radical agitation and they made an independent bid for the leadership of the loosely arrayed protest movement. Bruno von Salomon became editor of the main newspaper in Itzehoe Das Landvolk on the west coast of the province and quickly gained support from the revolutionary-nationalists in Berlin. In supporting and publicising the Peasant's grievances the newspaper was banned by the authorities and kept re-appearing under different names to avoid

the ban.²⁸ The paper soon attracted the attention of Claus Heim, a farmer whose personal charm enabled him to become the popular figurehead of the movement. Joined by Ernst von Salomon, Bruno and Claus Heim fanned the flames of growing protest which took a number of different forms. The technique of passive resistance was used in the form of the peasant's refusal to buy up land which had fallen into disuse, and later in a total trade boycott with Neuminster, the main town in the area, after police had violently broken up a farmer's demonstration there. More violent methods, very probably instigated by the Salomon brothers, manifested themselves in terrorist bombings on tax offices and other government buildings - acts of terror which were officially "disowned" by Salomon's newspaper.

The peasants adopted a black banner as their standard and the Peasants War of 1525 became their historical myth. Further movements sprang up in Saxony, Thuringia, Pomerania, East Prussia and Silesia. The coalition S.P.D. Centre government soon came to regard the movement as a threat to national security. This being the case the revolutionary-nationalists in Berlin emerged out of relative anonymity to enjoy some degree of political notoriety. The cause of the peasants in Schleswig-Holstein provided a focal point of unity for a number of dissident extremist groups. The Vormarsch circle was at the centre of this new spell of activism and controversy. Ernst von Salomon, in his memoirs, remembers the exclusive "Hans-Dieter Salinger salon", named after the business manager of Vormarsch, which used to hold regular and exclusive meetings in Halensee and Berlin. It provided an intellectual centre for the more intellectually and politically distinguished right-wing extremists of the period. Thus at a typical

meeting in Hielscher's apartment in the lower Friedrichstrasse in Berlin in 1929, they assembled to listen to the expressionist playwright Arnolt Bronnen speak of his latest novel O.S. Salomon recalls seeing among others the Juenger brothers, Hielscher, Hans Zehrer, and Otto Strasser and Herbert Blanck from the Nazi party. Ernst Juenger, the warrior with a firmly established literary reputation, was something of a central attraction especially for the younger nationalists like Salomon.²⁹ During the brief period at the turn of the decade he became something of an esoteric cult figure, a minor Stefan George. In 1929 Leopold Schwarzschild, left-wing editor of the political journal Tagebuch, described Juenger as "the undisputed intellectual leader of German nationalism among the younger generation."³⁰ Men like Hielscher, von Salomon, Arnolt Bronnen, Werner Best, Hans Ebeling, Werner Lass and Karl Paetel fell briefly under the spell of a man who remained an intellectually dominant salon figure in a world of violent political activists.

Salomon's contention however, that Juenger's circle represented "the jeunesse dorée" of the period is exaggerated. "These young people", he claims, "had already achieved positions in society to which their talents entitled them".³¹ To the revolutionary-nationalists however, their own achievements were accomplished in spite of the system. Most of them had some record of privation and frustration of their aspirations which provided fuel to their political extremism. Salomon had spent several years in jail for his part in Rathenau's murder. Both Juenger and Zehrer had to give up university studies which they started in the early twenties. Hielscher after graduating, walked the streets of Berlin unemployed. Otto Strasser and his associates in the Berlin Nazi party were looked upon prior to 1929 as guttersnipe politicians. Goebbels, who for a while was an associate

editor of Vormarsch, testifies in his diary to the utterly squalid conditions under which the Berlin branch initially operated.³²

Ferdinand Fried of the Tat circle pointed out that academic success under the conditions of wholesale graduate unemployment, merely offered the prospect of eking out a threadbare bourgeois existence, repaying debts accrued by six years of university study, and finally gaining an income commensurate with respectable bourgeois status in late middle-age.³³ Frustration, anomie, resentment all furnished the contempt felt for the democratic Weimar system which was seen as the tool and lackey of social-democrat bosses, monopoly capitalists, Jewish financiers and a decadent cosmopolitan left-wing literati. The "success" achieved by the leading revolutionary-nationalists lay entirely in the high intellectual and political reputation gained in the role of extremist opposition. It was the sort of success which is always possible in an open democratic society but which, often for that very reason, does not lead to a greater acceptance of the system but rather a hardening of attitudes against it.

In Weimar the conditions leading to a hardening of extremist attitudes were conditions which the pre-war generation of nationalists never had to contend with. Despite growing tension within Germany during the Wilhelman era the image of a self-confident and ordered authoritarian society prevailed. There was no general bourgeois revolt against authority, despite the growth of the Youth movement and the type of political bohemianism associated with expressionism. The bourgeois revolt in the Weimar Republic was to a large extent a revolt against the lack of authority. The "Kerenski epoch" of

Weimar, as Hans Zehrer called it, represented for younger post-war nationalists a rule of parliamentary incompetents in an age of prolonged social and economic crisis. For this reason their revolt was authoritarian and presented in conscious authoritarian terms. At the same time their methods and polemics were modern and radical. Perched precariously between tradition and modernity they fused the conservative and the revolutionary condemnations of bourgeois society. Together with the attack on the lack of authority went the attack on social and economic deprivation on American imperialism, on the excessive rationalisation of modern institutions and on the unwanted expertise of the educationally qualified which have been prominent in the recent revolt of middle-class youth in western societies. The crucial difference between contemporary rebellion and the resentment of the revolutionary-nationalists would seem to be over the question of values. Contemporary revolt is concerned, by and large, with the call for greater and more democratic political participation and greater social justice. It is generally chaotic, disorganised, spontaneous and anarchistic. Revolutionary-nationalism however radical its contempt for the alleged hypocrisy of bourgeois democracies owed its final allegiance to the model of an authoritarian state and to authoritarian values. Its revolutionary imagery remained yoked to a fixation with the omnipotent German state.

The unyielding commitment to the state revealed itself even in the support for the Peasants Movement which was, par excellence, a regional protest movement against the policies of the centralized state. Instead of developing political notions of state exploitation,

however, the revolutionary-nationalists regarded the failure of Weimar government over the peasant's problem as being due to its inability to execute authentic statist functions. Ernst von Salomon wrote in Das Landvolk:

"Precisely because he is conservative, (the peasant) must become revolutionary. Out of the massed assemblies of fighting peasants emerges the idea, not only that the peasant should express his belief in the necessity of the state but should himself contribute to its development. It is precisely for this reason that he must defend himself against the endeavours of the present system whose claim to be statist is basically a fiction." 34

Salomon went on to proclaim the need, (despite the bombings!) for a "centralised" or "federative" form of self-government to be achieved through Gandhi's method of passive resistance. This was less a plan for decentralisation than for the creation of "a state within a state". It was an attempt to introduce a regional politics on the model of an authoritarian state.

At the same time contradictions also existed between the grass-roots populist nature of the movement and the elitist attitudes of the revolutionary-nationalists. The revolutionary elitism of the Tat circle has already been discussed. In Zehrer's idea of a "revolution of the centre", the link between revolutionary intelligentsia and revolutionary mass was conceived of not as an equal and reciprocal partnership but as in terms of an elitist revolutionary movement. Similar attitudes characterised other revolutionary-nationalist groups. Part of the rationale for Otto Strasser's exit from the Nazi party in 1930 was couched in very precise elitist terms. Unable to get the support he wanted from the S.A. and from other northern radicals who remained loyal to his brother still in the party, Strasser nonetheless regarded his own splinter group, the Kampfgemeinschaft fuer Revolutionaerer Nationalsozialisten, later known as the Black Front, as the future

"Jacobins of the German revolution". He rationalised his own withdrawal from the movement in terms of the tactical political superiority of jacobin elitism over the complex and dysfunctional mass party machine.

"Adolf Hitler's national-socialism, (he wrote), has gone the way of all movements which are initially revolutionary. Attracted by the real force of a new idea, too many people flock out of turn to a movement which tends accordingly to become too diffuse. In this way they weaken the power, trivialise the purpose and break the absolute integrity of the new will - This is invariably the case. Girondist or Jacobin, Menschevik or Bolshevik, S.P.D. or K.P.D." 35.

The jacobinist sentiments of the Black Front, which tried to play its own part in the Peasants revolt by calling for a worker-peasant alliance, were equally to be found in the leaders of the movement. In his documentary novel based quite centrally on his own experiences, in Schleswig-Holstein, Ernst von Salomon puts into the mouth of his national-revolutionary hero Hans K. Ivinger, a fictional portrait of his brother Bruno, fairly conclusive elitist sentiments about the nature of revolution. Towards the end of the novel after the break-up of the peasants movement and the establishment of a mass following in the area by the Nazi party, Ivinger still tenaciously proclaims the sacredness and superiority of the revolutionary elite and a profound terrorist contempt for the masses.

"We are not making a revolution. We are the revolution. Is there, therefore, never to be any law and order in our beloved fatherland? No, by God, there shall be no law and order in our beloved fatherland. Must we expect, therefore, brute force....? Exactly, and those who do not use it must capitulate before it. So is this terror, is this chaos? Precisely. Is this what the nation wants? Nobody knows what the nation wants, now or in the future, but we want the nation. And who are we? We are those who want nothing more and nothing less than the nation.... We constitute our own striving towards the Reich.... Is this what the people want? No one knows what the people want, they themselves don't know what they want. But it is what we want." 36

The fate of the national-revolutionaries in Schleswig-Holstein illustrated quite clearly the fate of jacobinism when confronted by

extremist mass party organisation clearly intent on exploiting agrarian disaffection. Although at first some general unity existed between the revolutionary-nationalists and the Nazis, this soon disappeared when the Nazis, anxious to maintain the credibility of their legality policy, disowned terrorist violence. On one occasion when the Nazi party was mistakenly held responsible for bombings in the area, its response was to announce that it was offering a reward for information leading to the discovering of the culprits. In many ways the Schleswig-Holstein affair was a test case of a twofold reorientation of Nazi policy - the substitution of rural and nationalist ideological appeals for socialist ones and the decision to introduce in the interests of greater organisational effectiveness, more stringent controls over district party branches by central directives. The attempt of party radicals such as Heinz and Bodo Uhse, another ex-Freikorps man, to promote an ideological dialogue with the national-revolutionaries was frowned upon just as much as the policy of arbitrary terror, which the Nazis correctly surmised would alienate the majority of small farmer opinion. The political tactics of the Nazis in fact exposed the vulnerability of the loose and open-ended protest movement under Claus Heim. Heim was arrested and put on trial in Altona on bombing charges. His national-revolutionary supporters in Berlin were arrested by the political police after an article in the Vossische Zeitung by the left-wing journalist, Heinz Pol, alleging that they were prime conspirators in the movement. As a result the movement possessed no adequate organisational structure which could function in the absence of its leaders and Nazis accordingly moved in.

Not only did they recruit Wilhelm Hamkens who was Heims second-in-command to the party, but more important, as Rudolfe Heberle has shown, they offered official positions in the party to local young activists who played an important role in the Peasant's Movement. ³⁷

The success of their grass roots recruitment policy and their electoral successes in the area contrasted strongly with the terrorist jacobinism of the national-revolutionaries and the more doctrinaire efforts of the Communist to create a worker-peasant alliance.

The role of the national-revolutionaries in the Peasants Movements illustrates many of the dilemmas of the intellectual activist in radical politics. Much hinges on the question of how far his superior political knowledge and information and organising ability can coalesce with the grounds of local discontent. Even though he identifies with the grounds for discontent, he remains open to the charge of being an outsider or a sectarian political adventurer. The ideological prejudices of the national-revolutionaries and the perverse honesty of their elitism, merely added substance to the charges. Freedom from the shackles of party control meant great ideological latitude and independent terrorist initiatives. But the absence of the organisational norms of the mass party also entailed no permanent and binding relationships with the discontented populace. In addition whereas the Nazis realised the electoral system could be used to gain important positions of local power and establish clear-cut long-term political goals to motivate their followers, the national-revolutionary rejection of party organisation as "liberalistic" placed them, once the impetus of boycotts and bombings had died down, firmly out in the cold. The epitaph to their involvement with the peasants is expressed no more succinctly than in the words of Salomon's hero, Ivinger when he concludes that national-socialism, by leading

democracy ad absurdum had exhausted its historical mission and was no longer justified. History had repeated itself. Once more the Girondins would make the breach for the Jacobins to swarm through. "The task", he concludes, "lies in the hands of the revolutionaries and no one else. It lies in the hands of those who have already perfected the revolution in themselves." 38

Lingering attachments to the movement after 1930 remained. But the focal point of unity which it had provided for revolutionary-nationalism evaporated. The police detention of Juenger's circle in Berlin effectively resulted in the rundown of Vormarsch. Juenger himself gravitated towards the national-bolshevists. Hielscher's new magazine Das Reich exhibited an even more esoteric cosmopolitanism. Zehrer went on to edit Die Tat, the most successful of all the magazines. But the Tat circle ploughed its own furrow and ignored the national-bolshevists. The addition to national-revolutionary circles of Strasser's Black Front, which itself underwent an internal split in 1931, added to the complications. And other even smaller splinter groups sprang up to confuse the picture in those halycon days of disintegration before Nazism was victorious and silence was all. Even in their continued support for Claus Heim, their martyred leader still in prison, the national-revolutionaries were outflanked by the Nazis and the K.P.D. Certain that his movement had finally disintegrated, both parties bent over backwards to obtain his release and gain the favour of the peasants for having done so. An attempt to put up Heim as a presidential candidate was foiled by ex-comrade Beppo Roehmer who in his new role as a communist party functionary was successful in persuading Heim to stand down in favour of the communist candidate, Ernst Thaelmann. Practice having been

distinctly abortive the leading intellectual fascists in Germany went back to theory and prophecy. But in this scheme there was no role for the peasantry. The most complex and most enduring legacy of German intellectual fascism was the model of a totalitarian state which made the most ruthless use of warfare and technology conceivable in the twentieth century.

NOTES

CHAPTER VIII

1. See Ruth Fischer, Stalin and German Communism, p.90f.
2. V. L. Lenin, Left-Wing Communism: An infantile Disorder, p.56.
3. Abraham Ascher and Gunter Levi "National-Bolshevism in the Weimar republic." Social Research, Winter 1956, p.472.
4. Fischer, op.cit., p.192.
5. See, for example, "Der Wanderer in Nichts" and "Wirklichkeit" Gewissen, no 26th July, 1923. Reprinted in Das Recht der jungen Volker, ed. Hans Schwarz, Berlin 1932.
6. For the background and details of Niekisch's political activity in the twenties and early thirties see Ernst Niekisch Gewagtes Leben, Cologne 1954.
7. Entscheidung, p.25f.
8. ibid. p.10.
9. ibid. p.32.
10. ibid. p.44.
11. ibid. p.137f.
12. ibid. p.131.
13. ibid. p.46.
14. See Weber's writings for the Verein fuer Sozialpolitik between 1892 and 1895 on the agrarian problems east of the Elbe. In particular the "Ausblick" of his "Verhaeltnisse der Landarbeiter in ostelbischen Deutschland" partially reprinted in Edward Baumgarten Max Weber; Werk und Person Tuebingen 1964. For the personal and historical significance of Weber's attack on the Prussian Junkers see Arthur Mitzmann The Iron Cage, chapter 3.
15. Niekisch, op.cit., p.181.
16. See Hielscher's memoirs of his post-war years Fuenzig Jahre unter Deutschen, Hamburg 1954.
17. On Munzenberger's career see Helmut Gruber "Willi Munzenberger's German Communist Propaganda Empire 1921-1933" Journal of Modern History, vol. 38, 1966, pp.278ff.
18. Hielscher, op.cit., p.165.

19. So ist der Friede p.105.
20. Das Reich, p.45
21. See "Japan, Russland und die Westen", Vormarsch, no.12 May, 1928.
22. Das Reich, p.22-23.
23. Fuenzig Jahre unter Deutschen, p.169
24. *ibid*, p.80.
25. Das Reich, p.307.
26. *ibid*, p.21-22.
27. See Ernst von Salomon "Darbende Scholle" Widerstand IV, 1929, p.147ff.
 The following discussion follows closely the accounts given by Rudolf Heberle Landbevoelkerung und Nationalsozialismus p.156ff (a revised version of From Democracy to Nazism p.65f) and Otto Ernst Schuddekopf Linke Leute von Rechts, p.306ff.
28. Ernst von Salomon The Answers, p.146
29. *ibid*, p.132f.
30. See the introduction to Juenger's article " 'Nationalismus' und Nationalismus" Das Tagebuch, vol. 10, Sept. 1929, p.1552 ff.
31. Salomon, *op.cit.*, p.133.
32. Joseph Goebbels The Early Diaries, p.76
33. Ferdinand Fried, Das Ende der Kapitalismus, p.105ff.
34. "Das Kampf des Landvolks" in Das Landvolk, Itzehoe, reprinted in Karl O. Paetel National-Bolshevismus; Versuchung oder Chance, p.285ff.
35. Otto Strasser, Ministersessel oder Revolution, Berlin 1930, p.8.
36. Die Stadt, p.414f. Salomon's novel (English translation. They shall not be stormed, London 1935), gives a very clear and vivid account of revolutionary agitation at the time and of the tense relations between the revolutionary-nationalists and the Nazis. Other worthwhile fictional accounts are Bodo Uhse Soldner und Soldat and Hans Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben.
37. Heberle, *op.cit.*, p.167.
38. Die Stadt, p.416

CHAPTER IXThe Total State

Juenger's indisputable position of intellectual leadership within the Vormarsch circle was due to the esoteric mystique of his role as a fighter-intellectual which he assiduously cultivated, but it was outside the immediate circle of nationalist activity that Juenger came to acquire the most marked intellectual impact upon the development of his work. This was to be found in his association with the legal and constitutional political theorist Carl Schmitt, who had taught at Bonn university and moved to take up a professorship at the University of Berlin. Schmitt provided for the revolutionary-nationalists a link with the academic intellectual world from which by and large they were fairly distant. Like Karl Mannheim he possessed widespread influence both within and outside academic circles and was strictly speaking a new type of radical intellectual whom it would have been impossible to fit in any sense into the traditional pre-war pattern of the academic mandarin. He was forthright, lucid, direct, and above all polemical in orientation. His attack on the theory and practice of parliamentary democracy¹ perhaps put him in the forefront of the new intellectuals nurtured by the Republic. That same attack, however, was a direct assault on the legitimacy and foundation of the Republic itself.

In some of his earlier writing Schmitt had directly taken up some of the problems posed by Spengler and Moeller van der Bruck on the nature of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary tendencies in modern society. He emphasised the thin dividing line between the activistic

violence of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary extremists. The obvious example was the respective roles of the communists and the Freikorps in post-war Germany. What excited him about the nature of counter-revolutionary activity was the absolute decisiveness necessitated in its action in order for it to be effective. He derived this sentiment not only from the counter-revolutionary writings of Louis de Bonald and Joseph de Maistre during the period of French restoration but even more so from the Spaniard Donoso Cortes who had declared his implacable opposition to the French revolution of 1848 in radical counter-revolutionary terms. Schmitt's doctrine of decisionism² stemmed from these 'supreme' philosophers of the state" as he called them:

"The actual significance of these counter-revolutionary theorists lies in the consistency with which they make their decisions. They thrust forward the moment of decision in such a radical manner that it conclusively transcends the notions of legitimacy from which it has arisen."³

In the place of a system which is already crumbling before the pressures of revolutionary agitation, they advance an immediate and effective dictatorship which is no longer constrained by the constitutional procedures it uses under normal circumstances.

"Already....in the utterances of De Maistre there lay a reduction of the state to the moment of decision, that is to a pure and absolute decision, inaccessible to reason or discussion, which did not justify itself and in addition was created out of nothing".⁴

"The decision created out of nothing" is the leitmotif of Schmitt's work during the twenties, the absolute affirmation of the raison d'état by which the state in defending itself negates and rids itself of the encumbering constitutional constraints which make its action justifiable. This emancipation of the state from itself is in Schmitt's terms sufficiently radical to be comparable only with those revolutionary

acts which are intended to destroy the state in toto. He therefore sees a remarkable affinity in the 1848 revolution between the main theoretical protagonists Cortes and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. Both were opponents who understood the real nature of revolution and gave no quarter to the dilutions or compromise of parliamentary constitutionalism.⁵ Neither was interested in the liberal ideal of free discussion. While Proudhon saw Cortes as a fanatical grand inquisitor, the Spaniard looked upon the French socialist leader as a demon masquerading under the guise of anarchy. But both welcomed the slaughter which made their unyielding opposition to each other inevitable. For Schmitt this mutual contempt for all political rules in the face of revolutionary struggle set an important precedent for a new twentieth century development in which the ideas of state and revolution were no longer antithetical. As early as 1923 Schmitt had seen the importance of the fascist application in Italy of the Sorelian idea of political myth.⁶ The nation as a political myth was for Schmitt the binding link between the state and revolution which effectively made the distinction between revolution and counter-revolution meaningless. Both Mussolini's March on Rome and the Dublin Easter Uprising of 1916 gave him hope that twentieth century revolutions would henceforth be accomplished by those interested in restoring the power of the state rather than those interested in destroying it. The friendship of "Padriac Pearse and James Connolly, nationalist and anarchist" (sic) in the Irish rebellion was seen by Schmitt as a symbolic expression of a new alliance which would lead to a general renaissance of the state.⁷

Like Spengler's idea of the declaration of war as revolutionary, Schmitt envisaged a nationalist coup as a revolutionary act. Even if it

is generated in response to the fear of revolution, the instantaneous decision to seize power in order to create a new state is a form of emancipation from constitutional constraint. By seeking emancipation in the act itself rather than in its moral justification Schmitt shows himself indifferent to the theological and essentially Catholic premises of the nineteenth century counter-revolutionary theorists.⁸ Schmitt had derived the rationale for the decision not from theological premises, but from within the boundaries of the decision itself. In his famous essay Der Begriff des Politischen first published in its full form of 1929,⁹ decision becomes a function in human relations of the essential permanence of the fight (Der Kampf). The centrality of the fight in addition however points to the centrality of politics in human existence. All conflict is ultimately governed by politics and conducted on the basis of a fundamental distinction at the level of the political - the distinction between friend and foe.¹⁰ This distinction overrides all other distinctions at different levels of human existence such as that of good or evil in the sphere of morality, beauty or ugliness in aesthetics, profitability or unprofitability in economics and so on. While all of these provide a dichotomy analogous to that of friend and foe the likeness is purely one of analogy. The domination of the political over all spheres of life is contained within this fundamental distinction.

The criteria for the identification of foes, which in turn makes them potential victims of decisions that might be taken against them cannot be constrained by normative preconceptions and the decision to fight cannot be subject to impartial norms of procedure. The identification of the foe and the decision to fight are existential.

"The political foe need not be morally evil, he need not be aesthetically obnoxious. He should not appear as an economic competitor and it should even be possible to do business with him. He is just the other, the stranger

and it is enough that his nature, in a particularly intensive and existential sense is something other and strange for conflict to be possible with him in extreme cases. Such a conflict would not be determined either by a general set of rules decided in advance or by a non-participant and therefore "impartial" third party." 11

The existential criterion of the foe as the "other" legitimates the essential open-endedness of the selection of the foe and the impersonal nature of the enmity towards him. The decision to fight cannot be based on personal psychological hatred but solely and entirely on a political decision. In many ways Schmitt's analysis mirrors at a political level Juenger's insight into the nature of the Great War - that the intensity of the slaughter was in no way directly proportional to the national hatred or idealistic motivation of the different sides, but rather something which because of decisive political and military factors seemed to possess its own momentum. Consequently Schmitt's own analysis in a very real sense politicises the myth of the front-experience. The essence of the political is that it gives rise to the continual possibility of the type of war which is a legacy of the Great War. The political decision in a fundamental sense is a decision to declare war.

"The eventuality of struggle in the real world is part of the concept of the foe.... The essential thing about the concept of physical force is that it is a question of the physical murder of human beings. The word fight just as much as the word foe is to be understood in a primordial existential sense (seinsmaessigen Ursprunglichkeit). It does not mean competition, or the "purely spiritual" conflict of discussion nor the symbolic "struggle" in which man somehow fulfills himself, because as things stand, the whole of human life is a "fight" and every man a "fighter". The concepts friend, foe and fight are meaningful in the sense that they have reference in particular to the real possibility of physical murder. War ensues from enmity since enmity, existentially speaking, denies it any other possible attributes. War is merely the outward realisation of enmity." 12

War is essentially for Schmitt a fight between "organised political units". As an existential rather than a normative phenomenon, the appropriateness of the alleged ideals for which it can be fought are invariably called into question. In Schmitt's formulation of the problem the "ideas of 1914" through which the German professors attempted to interpret the Great War as a war of Kultur against liberal civilisation, could only have a propagandist content. Conservative nationalism in Germany could not provide any politically viable form of justification for the war, since all ideals merely contradicted the essential nature of war as the purely political decision to fight the foe:

"War... has no normative but only an existential meaning specifically in the real situation of a real struggle against a real foe, not in some kind of ideal or programme or norm. There is no rational purpose, no norm however justifiable, no programme however exemplary, no social ideal however marvellous, no legitimacy or legality which could justify men killing each other on its behalf.... No war can be founded on ethical or legal norms." 13

The nihilism of the front-fighter and the Freikorps terrorist to whom beside the call to fight, all the goals for which one fights pale to insignificance is raised by Schmitt to the level of the state itself. The role of the intellectual is significant only if his role had been construed as that of a fighter. The war of the pen waged by an academic literati is superfluous. It is within the realm of the political alone that all important decisions are made and to which knowledge or information, in any scholarly or scientific sense, has no purpose, and to which doctrines in any moral or ideological sense are irrelevant. The pointlessness of defining goals, the futility of possessing ideals, leads, as Karl Loewith has noted, to a "radical indifference to every political content of the purely

formal decision." ¹⁴ Schmitt's conception of war is that of the essential arbitrariness of the war of each against all in the Hobbesian state of nature raised to the level of the war between states as organised political units. The political state possesses in Schmitt's doctrine of fighting the same existential qualities as Hobbes' state of nature. Its predominant feature is random and arbitrary fighting. But fighting between organised states is intended as the antithesis to Hobbesian anarchy. The war of all against all is not the core problem of human order but its solution. In the place of the atomised disorganised distrust which characterises Hobbesian man in the state of nature where he is stripped down to his bare psycho-physiological credentials, in Schmitt's scheme of things these same credentials find expression in the organisation of the state. The political therefore is not the alternative to the state of nature. It is its institutionalised expression.

While Schmitt wishes to denigrate all values and ideals as empty normativistic formulae, it is clear in his own work that he possesses a very singular type of value-commitment to a specific form of politics. Indeed he himself declares that "all political concepts ideas and words have a polemical meaning."¹⁵ His own particular polemical option as it were is for the organised political unit in which modern warfare can be carried out most intensively and most effectively. For this reason, he denigrates the idea of internal war and in particular the Marxist notion of the class-struggle. The latter he admits has affinities with his own idea of fighting, particularly as it is a victim of the moderating effects of pluralism in liberal societies. Nonetheless since its avowed aim is to destroy the state,

it is ultimately incompatible with the true idea of the political. But what type of state does exist which is favourable to Schmitt's doctrine of fighting? He sets out to find the authentic state by discarding those political arrangements which have contributed to the state's downfall. The liberal age in Europe, he claims, is characterised by the increasing "neutralisation" of the state, by virtue of the ever-increasing emancipation of different spheres of human life from their specifically political obligations.¹⁶ The political theory of pluralism is the bourgeois ideology which legitimates this process by conceiving of it as the 'natural' development of 'society' and 'humanity'.

Schmitt's own polemical attack on what he regards as the nineteenth century conceptual distinction between state and society is directed in particular at the British socialists G. D. H. Cole and Harold Laski, both of whom he holds responsible for stressing polemically the importance of the ties of the individual to institutions and voluntary associations which were independent of state rule. The "society" of the pluralists is in effect a polemical concept used in the attack on the absolutist state, and its doctrinal statement reaches full fruition in the development within politics of socialism and within academic scholarship of sociology. Sociology, as what Carl Brinkmann, the national-economist had called an "oppositional science", was a bourgeois ideology in the sense that it defended the implacable dualism of state and society.¹⁷ The polemical counter-attack upon the development of society both as theory and practice is developed by Schmitt through the integration-theory of Rudolf Smend. In the same way that Smend had derived from Joseph Schumpeter's essay on

imperialism his notion of the essential aimlessness of the political fight,¹⁸ Schmitt gained from Smend the insight that it was possible to create a new form of organisation of the state in which it would be possible to re-integrate society into the polity with a view to perfecting this aimlessness. Such a state would be truly modern in the sense that it could effectively come to utilise within it all the resources it possessed for the pursuit of war. Schmitt called it, following Mussolini's phrase 'stato totalitario' a total state.¹⁹

The function of the total state was to integrate all extant forms of 'social' life into the polity and to make them all equally subject to the sovereignty of the political decision. The influence of Smend's integration theory on Schmitt differs at this point from the consequences it had for the theoretical orientation of the Tat circle. While both took the example of Italian fascism as being a model for the new type of state they envisaged, and while, in addition, the possibilities of a Sorelian myth of the nation as a means for the revolutionary seizure of power so important for the Tat-circle, had been seen by Schmitt as early as 1923,²⁰ there was quite clearly a distinction between the authoritarian state envisaged by the Tat-circle and the total state of Schmitt himself. The difference lies mainly in their differing attitudes to 'society'. While Zehrer and Fried for example had a strong theoretical orientation towards an understanding of the class-structure of modern society, an essentially sociological orientation, in Schmitt's terms the question of social stratification becomes one of secondary importance since all human life is to be governed by the political. While for the Tat-circle the problem is one of establishing new modalities in the relationship between state and society, providing of course these are essentially

authoritarian ones, Schmitt wishes to liquidate entirely the distinction between state and society. The total state then demands a process of historical transition from the age of neutralization characterised by liberal society to the age of struggle characterised by the total state. By the same token it would equally be a process in which the class-structure of society, what Marx had called the infrastructure would come to assume increasingly less importance. In Schmitt's terms therefore, Zehrer's notion of a "revolution of the centre" of a particular section of society against its exploited position could have no more meaning, whatever its sociological exactness, than the classic Marxism notion of the struggle of the proletariat. In any case social protest in a mass-democracy merely leads to the sterility of parliamentary discussion. The historical transition is therefore one which is by implication not itself revolutionary in social terms but in political terms - that is to say, in terms of its ability to engender the unhindered operation of the friend-foe distinction at the level of the state.

The attempt to abolish all 'normative' preconceptions about the nature of the state is admitted by Schmitt to be itself a polemical argument with its own partisan presuppositions. His own favourable attitude towards Hobbes, Machievelli and the nineteenth century theorists of counter-revolution is due to their own pessimistic assessments of the nature of man. "All the narrowly political theories of man", Schmitt claims, "presuppose him to be evil." ²¹ This is true equally of Schmitt himself. Like Spengler, his outlook is radically pessimistic. But unlike Spengler, whose gloom is derived from a vast morphology of world-cultures, Schmitt narrows the focus of his pessimism to a minimal existential definition of human nature. That man is invariably engaged throughout history

in murderous hostilities, is due to the fact that he is capable existentially speaking of nothing else. In humanitarian terms, it would be because he was capable morally speaking of nothing better. But Schmitt challenges all the humanitarian doctrines of pacifism, security, social harmony and progress, which he claims arise from a fundamentally erroneous assumption about the goodness of man. Such doctrines, he claims can only perform a propagandist function of masking the essential hostile nature of men to each other. The polemical argument of the Allied powers in World War I that they were fighting German barbarism on behalf of humanity, could only be looked upon as an instrument of imperialist expansion. "It characterises the enemy as being outside of humanity", Schmitt claims, "and can therefore justify any action against him."²² In his own terms however, the just war is not merely impossible: it is meaningless. Moral judgements have no place in the realm of the political decision.

Schmitt's premise of the evil nature of man leads him, as it does Pareto, to a radically confined view of the possibilities of human action. According to his existentialist viewpoint, the wherewithal of fighting calls forth endless possibilities. To this degree men's actions can be random and arbitrary. There are no possibilities on the other hand, of not fighting. Human freedom lies within the boundaries of necessary and permanent hostility. There are no other options. Just as Nietzsche saw no alternative to the will-to-power, or Pareto to the circulation of elites, Schmitt in his own brutal definition of the political could see no alternative to the substanceless decision to fight. Existential freedom existed only in the choice of foes. Out of the state of fallen nature came the collective war of each against all. Schmitt's

preconception of man's evil nature, even though he remains indifferent to the psychological premises on which his preconception rests, does hinge upon a moral judgment. While Schmitt denies the relevance of morality, he himself admits that he proceeds with a notion of man's evil nature. Polemically he is committed to the idea of man's incapacity to do good. It is the deliberate exclusion of the sphere of goodness which provides the rationale for the alleged necessity of fighting. It is only natural therefore that only one side of the friend/foe dichotomy is significant to Schmitt. The nature of the political remains not a search for friends but a search for foes. Friendship has a secondary tactical significance which springs out of the decision to fight.

The idea of the total state does not altogether accord with the definition of the political. The occasional or even exceptional nature of the political decision Schmitt presents us with gives little basis for considering the permanent norms which circumscribe the activity of the state. Nonetheless the idea that fighting was facilitated by the creation of a total state had an immediate impact on Ernst Juenger. For it posed the question, what are the institutional processes necessary to the creation of such an arrangement? Thanks to Schmitt Juenger's self-styled 'Prussian anarchy' was able to set up its nihilist blueprint under the aegis of the political. The outcome of the idea of a total state is the idea of total mobilisation.

NOTES

CHAPTER IX

1. See his Verfassungslehre (Munich 1928) and Die Geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus (Munich 1923).
2. On his doctrine of decisionism see Karl Loewith "Der okkasionelle Decisionismus von C. Schmitt" in Gesammelte Abhandlungen, p.93ff.
3. Politische Theologie, (2nd ed), Munich 1922, p.83
4. *ibid.*
5. "Die Politische Theorie des Mythos" in Positionen und Begriffe: im Kampf mit Weimar-Genf-Versailles 1923-1939, p.12
6. *Ibid*, p.14.
7. *Ibid*, p.17.
8. Loewith, *op.cit.*, p.102.
9. First given in shortened form as an address to the Deutsche Hochschule fuer Politik in Berlin and published in the Archiv fuer Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik, vol.58, p.1ff (1927).
10. Der Begriff des Politischen, (Text of third edition, 1932), Berlin 1963, p.26.
11. *ibid.*, p.27.
12. *ibid.*, p.33. The word Kampf in revolutionary-nationalist usage has been translated in most instances as 'fight'. Where this seems inappropriate in English usage it has been rendered as 'conflict' or 'struggle'.
13. *ibid.*, p.49-50.
14. Loewith, *op.cit.*, p.108
15. Schmitt, *op.cit.*, p.31
16. *ibid.*, p.24.
17. "Die Wendung zur totalen Staat" in Positionen und Begriffe, p.147f In this context, Schmitt cites the words of Eduard Spranger as an example of the simplest and clearest account of the usage of the term 'society': "In German sociological language it is usual to characterise the endless abundance of free and organised, natural and artificial, transient and lasting forms of human unity, which are not of the church or state simply as "society", *ibid.* footnote p.147.

18. Rudolf Smend Die politische Gewalt im Verfassungstaat und das Problem der Staatsform, 17f. See Ernst Fraenkel The Dual State, p.201f.
19. Der Begriffe des Politischen, p.24; "Weiterentwicklung des totalen staats in Duetschland" in Positionen und Begriffe, p.186; see also Hans Buchheim Totalitarian Rule, p.51f.
20. Notably in his essay "Die Theorie des Mythus" op.cit., where he conceives of Mussolini's march on Rome as a nationalist and revolutionary road to the creation of a new authoritarian order.
21. Der Begriff des Politischen, p.61.
22. *ibid.*, p.55.

CHAPTER XHeroic Realism and Total Mobilization

Schmitt's existential doctrine of fighting was a product of the trauma of violence which had seized Germany from 1914 onwards. The analytical distinction between friend and foe was like a mandarin mirror-image of a far deeper and more emotionally disturbed attachment to violence which the legacy of war, defeat and revolution had given to the military outlaws of German society. Schmitt's lucid, self-confident and almost restrained prose hid beneath it a disintegration of values, a simmering rage for brutality, and a fundamental contempt for the rule-governed conflicts of a democratic society. Schmitt, like Mannheim, had propounded a solution of sorts to the problem of relativism. Unlike Mannheim, however he had not sought out the salvation of a historical dialectic which could ensure that some values at least were indestructible. On the contrary, he blandly asserted that values were no longer important at all. Fighting had replaced values at the centre of political life, and values had been relegated to an ideological superstructure where they possessed purely propagandist functions. The academic whizz-kid of the Weimar Republic had provided the crucial ammunition for the warriors of the salon. Juenger and his circle saw in Schmitt's doctrine a specifically political application of their unpolitical sentiments. The friend/foe distinction appealed to the diffuse nature of their hatred and resentment. It had in effect shelved the problem of friends and concentrated on the more acceptable problem of foes.

In a symposium edited by Juenger in 1930 called War and Warriors (Krieg und Krieger) the indebtedness of the revolutionary-nationalists to Schmitt clearly reveals itself. Despite the uneven nature of the contributions to the volume, two essays, one by Juenger and another by Werner Best, develop along lines suggested by Schmitt. Akin to Schmitt's doctrine of fighting was Best's concept of heroic realism. Complementing Schmitt's conception of a total state was Juenger's idea of total mobilisation. Both provided a rationalisation and ideologisation of the nihilism of the front-experience and its historical legacy. Like Niekisch's national-bolshevism and Hielscher's metaphysical colonialism, they were nihilistic solutions to the problem of nihilism. For them Nietzsche's prophecy had already come true. Prior to Nazism Europe had already witnessed the spectre of nihilism. The coming century of nihilism had already arrived; instead of the fire next time, the fire this time. Thus judging themselves at the centre of the prophesied reality of nihilism, they fall into the same trap as the prophet himself did in The Will to Power and make nihilistic prescriptions to end the nihilism which for Nietzsche was yet to come, but for them had already occurred. The age of destruction had already been reached. Only its incipient chaos was subversive. The best answer to chaotic destruction was organised destruction. Out of the clear distillation of opaque destructive sentiments a new totalitarian philosophy was born. The solution of nihilism by nihilism became the most flagrant double negation based on false premises which the twentieth century had witness to. Total mobilization, gruesomely prophetic of the second global conflagration of the century a decade, was the fascist doctrine of those who saw the only form of atonement for human imperfection in the absolute reign of total destruction.

In Juenger's symposium a clear expression of contempt is to be found for Germany's pre-war conservative intelligentsia. Albrecht Guenther, the Hamburg revolutionary-nationalist who contributed a piece on "War and the Intellectuals" speaks derisively of the "society of gentlemen" (Honoratioren-Gesellschaft) who occupied professorial chairs under the humanist educational system of the nineteenth century.¹ According to Guenther the emphasis on cultivation (Bildung) in German education had led to the starvation of the natural sciences. It also led to an excessive academic servility to the "feudal-military caste" which ruled Germany. "The title of Doktor," he claimed "signified at most, enrolment into a particularly badly paid class of intellectual lackeys (Intelligenzkulis)"² The failure of the growth of the natural sciences became evident, he went on, in the first world war when conservative intellectuals were highly regarded for their publicist and propaganda roles than for their scientific or technocratic capabilities. Adopting Max Weber's critique of the "ideas of 1914" to his own purposes, Guenther claims that war-propaganda was characterised by the superficial optimism of "Journalists and literati who possessed no integral relation to the state or the nation."³ Where technical performance was the decisive contribution that the intelligentsia could have made to the war-effort especially in the development of sophisticated armaments, its only achievement was to parrot a "war-blind" and "school-masterly" form of Kultur propaganda which was totally ineffectual. Guenther's condemnation of Germany's pre-war intelligentsia is in fact one specific aspect of Juenger's attack on Wilhelmian Germany. While Guenther criticises the German intellectuals for their lack of

technocratic capability, and their idealistic preference for Kultur as against military performance, Juenger extends the criticism of conservative nationalism to incorporate a condemnation of a whole era of industrial-feudal society. To him, it was inadequate to cope with the type of modern technological war it had undertaken.

As a staendische society ruled by political and military castes and status-groups it had been first surprised and finally destroyed by the new social phenomena which mass warfare had brought into being. The process was irreversible. The restoration of the monarchy and the recreation of an absolutist state on eighteenth century lines was an obsolete conservative illusion. In an extended passage Juenger attempts to chart the unalterable and dynamic transformation which had taken place in central-European society, as a result of the Great War:

"The times are long since past when it was sufficient to dispatch a hundred thousand recruited subjects onto the battlefields, as in Voltaire's Candide, and when, if 'His Majesty' lost the battle, peace could be demanded as a civic duty. But in the second half of the nineteenth century conservative war-cabinets could still plan, execute and win wars which the people's representatives were either indifferent to, or rejected. This, to be sure, presupposed a completely unique relationship between Crown and Army, a relationship which only underwent a superficial transformation through the more dynamic forms of life originating in universal military service and which in essence, still belonged to the patriarchal world. It presupposed, moreover, a certain calculability in the extent of costs and armaments, which made the war appear as an extraordinary but in no way limitless outlay of existing energy and resources. In this sense mobilization was identified as a partial measure.

"It only remains to be seen now the growing transformation of life into energy (wachsende Umsetzung des Lebens in Energie) which more and more demanded transient types of social ties favourable to mobility, bestowed upon the concept of mobilization - which at the outbreak of the war was enacted in many countries by the monarchy independently of countersignature - an increasingly incisive character. There were a multiplicity of factors which determined this. With the obliteration of status-groups (Staende) and the curtailment of the privileges of the nobility, the concept of the warrior-caste automatically disappeared. The military service of the nation is no longer the duty and privilege of the professional soldier but instead becomes the task of all those who are capable of fighting. In addition as the chaotic multiplication of costs makes it impossible to base

the war on a fixed budget, it is much more necessary for the extension of credit and the utilization of the last spare penny to get war-machinery into motion. The image of war as an armed encounter merges even more into an ever-expanding image of a giant process of work. Adjacent to the armies which meet each other on the battlefield arise the newly-formed industries of communications, of supplies, of armaments - above all the army of work. In the last significant phase of the war when it was already nearing its end there was no activity, not even a housewife at her sewing machine, which did not have an indirect bearing on the course of the war. In the absolute utilisation of potential energy which changed the leading warring nations into volcanic forges, the beginnings of the fourth estate were perhaps indicated at its most significant - they made the world war an historical phenomenon of at least equal importance to the French Revolution. To generate energy of such proportions it is no longer necessary just to mobilize a force of arms - a mobilization of the inmost strength, of the very nerve-centre of life (Lebensnerv) is necessary. To realise this is the task of total mobilization."⁴

Juenger's interpretation of the demise of the autocratic and monarchical Staendestaat is as crucial to the doctrine of revolutionary-nationalism as the interpretation of the self-destructive nature of capitalism is to the doctrine of Marxism. The militaristic ethos of Prussia in the modern industrial world was not, as Sombart once saw it, an indication of the coming triumph of the warlike industrial society over its peaceful Anglo-Saxon Spencerian counterpart, but of the persistence of an archaic ruling class whose tendency to militarism and in addition, whose quest for world-power, represented the means of its own destruction. For Juenger it was, politically and historically speaking, capable of nothing more than partial mobilization. The drawing of this crucial distinction between partial and total mobilisation should be seen quite clearly as a debate with the liberal Anglo-Saxon ghost of Herbert Spencer. The Great War had clearly made nonsense of Spencer's claim that modern industrial societies were peacelike. In stating that they are permanently warlike, however, Juenger borrows a distinction which Spencer himself had applied to traditional militant societies.

Here the criterion of "the survival of the fittest" is according to Spencer to be found in those societies which subordinate the total population to the necessities of waging war. The victorious social type emerges from those societies who operate on this principle. Vanquished societies are those who allow their workers to retain the produce of their own labour.⁵ Juenger applies Spencer's critique of the survival of the fittest in militant societies to industrial societies, thus sabotaging the fundamental distinction which Spencer attempted to make between the two types. Total mobilisation in Juenger's essay is the key (in the modern world) to the survival of the fittest. Partial mobilisation is a sure sign of ruin and disintegration. In Der Arbeiter the concept of total mobilisation retains the Spencerian, or perhaps one should say Social Darwinist, aura of fitness and survival. Juenger plots the failure of European absolutism as the failure of Spencerian adaptation to the demands of a very un-Spencerian warlike industrial world.

Partial mobilization meant not only defeat but the destruction of a way of life and the falling of the curtain on a whole epoch of European history. The Russian, Austro-Hungarian and Turkish empires all went the way of the Second Reich for almost identical reasons. The more intense the absolutism of the monarchy, as in the case of the Czarist regime in Russia, the greater the intensity of the upheaval which accompanied its destruction. The European monarchies, in unleashing the forces of the fourth estate, had unleashed the forces of their own destruction. All the trappings of military regalia and military honour and all the cultural airs of belligerence which had characterised the Wilhelminian era, the apparent source of its political and military self-confidence, had in the long run, according to Juenger made no difference at all. The sterility of a status-bound military culture was fully illuminated by the fact that the United States, a

country with a democratic constitution and an isolationist foreign policy, could mobilize for war using measures of a harshness impossible in a land which combined its militarism with the inequality of the three-class suffrage.⁶

The indisputable fact that the West, through its democratic governments, had been in a better position to mobilise the population and retain their political confidence is not an indication however of Juenger's conversion to democracy, but rather of the stiffening of his resolve to create a German nationalism which has liberated itself from the vestiges of the absolutist and patriarchal world. It is an attempt to revitalise the Prussian spirit while at the same time eradicating the sources of its historical failure. Juenger's sense of mission in denigrating the political rulers involved in the German war effort results in his historical underestimation of the technological foresight of Rathenau and Wichard von Moellendorf in trying to develop a planned mixed economy in which it would be possible to ensure the most technologically efficient co-ordination of all sectors of industrial production for the war-effort.⁷ Their efforts to create a Planwirtschaft both during and after the war had in fact shown no uncertain perspicacity in recognizing the need for co-ordinating conservative political rule with socialistic economic measures.⁸ The planned economy of the Soviet Union which was so crucial to the adulation of Russia by the national-bolsheviks was in fact indebted to German ideas and experiments. Lenin's economic advisers Milyutin and Lavin drew explicitly on the notions of Rathenau and Moellendorf in their creation of industrial trusts by which they tried in the twenties to restore the shattered Russian economy.⁹ Nonetheless it was essential for revolutionary-nationalism to totally disassociate itself from the previous failure of the Prussian

state. Rathenau, the victim of assassins who held his work in high esteem, was once more relegated to a position of ignominy for being on the 'wrong' side of history.

The significant feature of Juenger's new concept of total mobilization is that it presupposed the exceptional aspect of the war-measures to be the permanent basis for the organisation of society in the twentieth century. The notion of war-preparedness which Spengler had eulogised as the truly revolutionary feature of modern life could no longer be simply manifested in the transient adulation of 1914, but must be the subject of permanent regeneration. The western idea of progress, which Juenger sees as the ideological basis of the onward march of Western civilisation could no longer be challenged by an ideology which merely asserted ideals in the new urban-industrial age. Any ideal of Kultur, no matter how it asserted itself, was predestined to failure:

"Who can deny that 'civilisation' is more inwardly related to progress than 'culture', that it finds in the big cities the possibility of speaking its natural language and knows of ways and means of manipulating it, to which culture itself either has no relevance or remains hostile. Culture has no currency as propaganda...." ¹⁰

Democracy, urban-industrial society, so-called mass culture, gave to the West the natural advantages of political domination in the twentieth century which they successfully exploited through the ideology of progress. While Marxism characterised imperialism in terms of economic exploitation, and Oppenheimer and Schumpeter envisaged it primarily in terms of military conquest,¹¹ both Juenger and Schmitt, bearing foremost in their minds the example of the idea of progress, saw 'imperialism' as the domination of one nation over another by an alien ideological language. Like Hielscher, they saw Berlin, the centre of Germany as an outpost of alien Western

civilisation, which in Juenger's case, was the historical outcome of the defeat of staendische society by liberal-democratic society.

The imposition of an alien civilisation, one more congruous with a modern industrial Germany than the Wilhelman era had ever been, was treated as a form of 'cold war' domination. Not only did the revolutionary-nationalists see the Versailles Treaty in terms of this type of imperialism but also the more recent Kellogg Pact of August 1927 which had been signed in Paris by a number of Western and European powers and was as a general indictment of war. According to Schmitt, the pact which condemned war except as "an instrument of national policy", was a form of political doublespeak which enabled the imperialist powers of the West to carry out wars in the name of peace and to conceive of their wars on behalf of humanity as a form of 'global pacification'. The essence of this type of western imperialism was Caesar dominus et supra grammaticum:

"Imperialism creates for itself its own concepts, and a false normativism and formalism only leads to a situation in which finally no-one knows what peace and war are.... It is an expression of real political power if a great people determines for its own part the way of speaking and even the way of thinking of other peoples, their vocabulary, terminology and concepts. As Germans we are truly in a state of dismal political powerlessness, not only in the world but within Europe, and as a German I can only have the feeling that, through this accomplishment of American imperialism, I am speaking like a beggar in rags about the kingdoms and treasures of strangers." 12

Although the west could generate periodic total mobilization in time of war, it relied also, Schmitt claimed, upon the dominance of an ideology of progress also in times of peace. The idea of progress, however, was such that by its appeal to "humanity" it could achieve imperial domination through language as well as through

active military mobilization. As opposed to the west, Germany had possessed a culture the masses ignored and a patriarchal ruling class capable of only partial mobilization. Nonetheless the future appropriation of total mobilization by Germany was a possible means of emancipation both from the Wilhelminian era which had failed Germany and from the post-war era of defeat and cultural subservience to the idea of progress. For Schmitt, Juenger's idea of total mobilization came to have an important historical significance. It marked the end of the age of neutralization which characterised nineteenth and twentieth century European societies after the demise of eighteenth century absolutism.¹³ It was the means by which the total state could be brought into existence.

There remained however a basic historical contradiction in the relation of total state to total mobilisation. Juenger saw total mobilisation as a brainchild of the state. Schmitt, on the other hand, saw it as the means to the rescuscitation of the state. Neither was able to state unequivocally how it was possible for total mobilization to arise in Germany in the absence of an authentic form of statist domination. The specific historical reference for total mobilisation, the calling of the nation to war, is a specifically statist enterprise. Whether it could be achieved prior to or independently of this, Schmitt and Juenger never clearly say. The contradiction however is one which arises directly as a result of their counter-revolutionary position and illuminates even more clearly their inability to conceive of revolution as an insurrection against the state. While Schmitt had seen in the counter-revolutionary decision the initial impetus for the counter-attack of the state against

modern society, Juenger's own idea of total mobilisation as a revolutionary phenomenon was based on post-revolutionary circumstances. After war-preparedness, it was Soviet planning in the Stalin era which he saw as approximating most closely to his concept. Total mobilization was here dependent on a prior revolutionary seizure of power about which Juenger has little or nothing to say. Total mobilization is therefore a conjunction of counter-revolutionary and post-revolutionary processes. It is a historically dynamic process which enlarges rather than diminishes the powers of the state, and which by implication, can only be brought about by revolutionary anti-statist movements if such movements betray their own ideals. The easier alternative is the one offered by Schmitt. It can be better brought about by counter-revolutionary movements who stick to their own goals.

Total mobilisation remained definitively a "revolution from above". Juenger's claim that in the future technological warfare would produce universal armies of work was clearly a suggestion that whole populations can only be made authentically revolutionary by a process inaugurated by the state itself. This being the case however, he has no conception of the revolutionary means by which such a totalitarian state can be brought into being. When in The Worker he falls back on total mobilisation to explain the transition from bourgeois society to the worker's state, he relies upon an effect to explain the cause which produces it. The counter-revolutionary masquerading as revolutionary finds he cannot have his cake and eat it. The central paradox of the conservative revolution all at once becomes transparent. How is it possible to have a revolution

against what is considered to be a non-statist state? How is it possible to revolt against the absence of authority? The Nazi answer was simple. Use the democratic system in order to destroy it. The revolutionary-nationalists' desire to avoid contamination by the system meant that they were left without a genuine strategy for revolution at all. The other alternative was war. But without a strong state they could not declare war, and without a war they could not envisage the means of creating the state. To go back to the counter-revolutionary situation meant being waiting for the next left-wing revolution, and this would have been less a credible ploy for theorists than for agents provocateurs. They at least might have the technical and political expertise which Juneger's circle clearly lacked to ensure a self-fulfilling prophecy. The Nazi solution was essentially a practical and pragmatic one - propagate the fear of left-wing revolution by invoking the spectre of 1918, even though this testified to its failure, and get involved in the parliamentary system, even though this meant forgoing statist principles. In any case for the Nazis the state of the future was not to be an impersonal and objective apparatus however authoritarian. It was to be a party state, to be controlled by those who had seized power.

Juenger's argument then lead him away from strategies for the seizure of power. He remained obsessed with the key to mobilising the masses, not in the party-political sense, but in the military-statist sense. Convinced like Schmitt of the effectiveness of Allied propaganda in the First World war, of the seemingly irresistible nature of appeals to humanity and progress in the age of popular sovereignty, he wished to dream up a specifically Germanic counter-response. What was needed, he thought, was a new life-style and a new

set of attitudes conducive to accepting the necessity of war not for the future of peace or humanity but for the future of Germany. A new German ideology would have to be created equal to this task.¹⁴ This was the onus of heroic realism.

Heroic Realism

The necessity of maintaining psychological morale in modern armies has invariably been a crucial factor in their military performance but the immense difficulties experienced by the European monarchies in fighting total wars had led in Germany, Russia and Hungary to the disintegration of the power of the state and subsequent revolution. Juenger, in fact, regarded revolution as an almost mechanical outcome of the failure of partial mobilization.¹⁵ The task of total mobilization was therefore primarily an ideological one. The success of the war-effort in total war depended on people continuing to believe in the war whatever circumstances and privations they would have to face. Juenger's conception of a universal army, however, conflicts with his earlier notion of struggle as essentially a form of immediate physical violence called forth by the rage for blood.¹⁶ Heroic realism in essence is a creed not of the universal army but of the fighter, whose specific role is concerned with physical murder in a direct sense. Although Juenger quite clearly wishes to oppose it to the Western ideology of progress, "the great peoples religion of the nineteenth century",¹⁷ there is a clear contradiction, which remained unresolved until Der Arbeiter, between the objective process of total mobilization, as demanding the universal co-ordination of work, and the specific role of the heroic realist fighter directly concerned with physical violence.

The term "heroic realism" was used initially in the symposium by Werner Best in his essay "The War and the Law". Best, a young lawyer and an associate editor of Vormarsch, attempted to show the formal limitations of natural right conceptions of law in attempting to constrain human conflict in the modern world. Heavily influenced by Nietzsche's critique of law in the Genealogy of Morals, Best saw all struggle as a feature of the endless will-to-power which characterises man's existence, and constitutional law as a merely utopian artefact which ineffectively attempts to stabilise and regulate it. But it is helpless before what Nietzsche called "an eternally self-creating and self-destroying world". Law and change are therefore polar opposites:

"Law in its most complete form is also a form of regulation, the ordering of situations, which no longer recognizes struggle, force or tension.... Change is the antithesis of law; it overcomes law which invariably returns to the ordering of situations." 17

The fighter on the other hand, recognises no form of the regulation of situations, of legal uniformity, but merely the notion of destiny from which all explanations in any casual sense are absent. The denial by Best here of what we might regard as any form of Weberian legal-rational domination, is due to his perception of the legal uniformity of natural rights as an utopian attempt to regulate man's - by implication, essentially evil - nature. What Best terms the "utopian-rational" and "moral-idealist" conceptions of law in liberal society are therefore travesties of what he considers to be the essential nature of human reality:

"The utopian-rationalist and moral-idealist doctrines deny the empirical reality of life, which we have identified simultaneously as being struggle, tension, change and catastrophe. For these doctrines find their synthesis above all in either an anticipated or intended transcendence of this reality. (On the other hand) what we can here call nationalism accepts the conflictual reality of our environment.... From a realistic acceptance

of truth will thus emerge a heroic doctrine; consequently as terminological parallels to the "utopian-rational" and "moral-idealist" conceptions we can characterise the attitude of nationalism as one of heroic realism." 18

Nationalism therefore is not merely a partisan commitment to the cause of one's nation. It specifies more generally the need for heroic resistance on the part of the fighter to all forms of philosophical transcendence. Precisely by virtue of its refusal to recognise utopianism of any sort, it differs both from the racial utopianism of the Nazi ideologists and the historicist utopianism of the Tat circle. Neither race nor history are viable criteria of the necessity for fighting, which recognises no future goals to which it can be purely instrumentally oriented. Best in fact presents an even more radical statement of the meaninglessness of goals than Schmitt:

"The new doctrine cannot lay down "what" because it recognises no such thing. It is not directed towards a goal and does not fulfill some purpose of completion or fulfillment. Every moment calls into question the moment which has preceded it. No values for which we may have at one time fought can make any claim to being positive or permanent. The criterion of morality is not "what" but "how", not its content but rather its form. "Not what we fight for, but how we fight is the essential thing". (Juenger). The fight is necessary and permanent, the goals of the fight are temporary and changeable". 19

Whereas the utopian rationalist claims that some overall meaning is present in the nature of any conflict which renders it explicable, the heroic realist affirms both his heroism and realism by recognising that fighting has no rationally explicable meaning at all. It is not a matter of circumstances but a matter of destiny. The heroic act consists in the acceptance of a cruel and inexplicable reality. It accepts that there is no alternative to continuous fighting and the

likelihood of men dying by fighting as well as living by it.

The acceptance of empirical reality also involves the acceptance of the possibility of defeat. The expectation of total victory is a utopian illusion:

"There can be no question of success in our fight. The most immediate object of fighting lies in winning, but victory is not the decisive thing in the ethos of the fighter. The hope of victory is not always the governing factor for those who are fighting. Those who do believe in an ultimate purpose which makes fighting tolerable for them, usually can fight in the expectation that they themselves will win or that one day the "good cause" will triumph. The criterion of the new doctrine on the other hand is the acceptance of the fight in a lost position for a lost cause. It is a question of fighting a good fight, not of the "good cause" or of possible victory." 20

The existential fight in which victory is of secondary significance vindicates the supremacy of means over ends, of performance over values, and of violence over its moral or historical meaning. Juenger claimed that heroic realism resolved successfully the antithesis between materialism and idealism in the explanation of human behaviour. But what he really expressed was his fundamental aversion to causality as a form of rational explanation. Since no victory was ever certain heroic realism declared all fighting to be indefinite. It demanded the preparedness to fight, without rational explanation, in real circumstances which offered total destruction and hopelessness. Fighting as an indefinite confrontation with a destructive reality could not be explained in terms of an historical causality which rested on premises of a distinction between either violent and non-violent epochs of human history on the one hand, or violent or non-violent states of human behaviour on the other. For fighting itself

was the essential and continuous reality of all human behaviour. In addition the fighter's relation to reality was immediate, specific and of itself produced no new or enlarged spatio-temporal unities. The existential core of the fighter's being was related to the immediate action in which he was involved. Thus Juenger states in a letter to one of his national-revolutionary associates in 1930:

"I am suspicious of formulas such as that of "future" reality. Either I have a relation to reality, and in that case I have always had it and would not be able to lose it, or else I do not have it at all. In the very moment when I storm a row of filthy trenches, this moment is real for me and what do I care for all the hundreds of constellations further out in space. Out of the succession of such moments is produced the route of my journey. It is the character of reality in a special dimension." 21

The heroic invincibility of the existential fighter is thus conjured out of his unflinching acceptance of the destructive here and now. On the surface Best and Juenger have presented the ethos of the no-win fighter striving on against relentless opposition and impossible odds. The heroic realist is pictured as the victim of an overwhelming exploitation and oppression whose power is unalterable. Yet the crucial point about heroic realism is that it is not a doctrine of the oppressed but a doctrine of the oppressors. It is the doctrine that under the endless conflict and play of the will-to-power, the rulers as well as the slaves or chandalas, to use Nietzsche's term, face the prospect of periodic defeat. In the continual war of the proto-Nietzschean rulers against their inferiors no ultimate victory is possible. Best makes this clear when he affirms the principle of class-struggle. This does not merely mean "class-struggle from below" but also "class-struggle from above", the struggle of rulers against the insurgent mob.²² What Juenger saw as constraining the possible supremacy of the Nietzschean masters in the twentieth century

was the equalization of military prowess created by the development of modern technology. The task of establishing supremacy, of the rulers asserting their will-to-power had become immensely more complex and difficult than Nietzsche had ever envisaged.

For Nietzsche domination of the strong over the weak was a fundamental form of liberation. The will-to-power expressed itself through a brutality and cruelty inseparable from its own sense of primordial innocence. The pseudo-liberation of the superman freed from all moral and legal constraints of civil society was the source of the sense of liberation which pervades Spengler's elation at war-mobilization and Schmitt's elation at the effective counter-revolutionary decision. In the Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche writes:

"Here they enjoy liberation from all social constraints. They recover in the wilderness from the tension produced by their long imprisonment and containment within civil society. They step back into the innocent consciousness of the beast of prey as exultant monsters which perhaps walk away from a horrific sequence of murder, arson, rape and torture, with such wantonness and equanimity as if they were merely carrying out some student prank, with the conviction that now and for a long time to come the poets will have something to sing about and celebrate. At the center of all these splendid races the beast of prey, the roving lustful blond beast is not to be mistaken." 23

The blond beast roving cruelly in the wilderness is freed from the moral constraints of the Judao-Christian world. He breaks out of the "resentment-morality" of history's slaves. Nietzsche's etymological derivation of 'good' from 'strong' and his contempt for the weak is pervaded by a delirious nostalgia for a pre-civilisational world in which there was no obstacle to the might of physically superior races. The growth of morality and legality in western civilisation had destroyed his golden age of barbarism, and he demanded revenge.

Heroic realism is to be seen essentially as an addendum to

Nietzsche's doctrine of the barbaric supremacy of the master, rationalising the position of the ruling race at the nadir of its fortunes. Historically that period had, in the eyes of the revolutionary-nationalists, already been reached. The decade of the twenties was a decade of the humiliation of the Germans who should have been the rulers of Europe. Instead of being dominant, they had subjected to the indignity of the Versailles Treaty and the Kellogg Pact, submerged by the western idea of progress and outmanoeuvred by the pacifist ideal of humanity. The rulers were themselves ruled by the imperialism of peace and progress with, as Schmitt put it, its "alien language". The luxury of sudden conquest, the pleasure of arbitrary cruelty which Nietzsche had proclaimed with such utopian fervour was no longer possible. A different tactic was suggested by heroic realism. In Juenger's eyes this was the tactic of invisibility. In The Adventurous Heart he had written of the Prussian anarchist - now turned heroic realist - immersed in his nihilism. "For a long time we have marched towards a magic zero-point (Nullpunkt) which can only be surpassed by having at our disposal other invisible sources of power." ²⁴ Hielscher's protestant theodicy, the invisible German Reich, was just such a source of power. It was the immune and invisible core of metaphysical resistance residing in Berlin, the ecological heart of Western dominance. For Juenger this constituted a "secret Reich" and "Eternal Germany" into which all the fallen fighters of the front had passed. They had passed from "an imperfect into a perfect reality". They inhabited "a domain of mythic proportions" and bequeathed a new certainty and a new basis of legitimation for future German generations in their fight against the west.

With this evocation of an "eternal Germany" Juenger seems, like Hielscher to have sought refuge in a form of metaphysics which has its roots in theology and German classical idealism. But on close examination his purpose appears more different. Trenchantly atheistic, he never believed in any theological sense in life-after-death. In addition the whole tenor of his essay is an attack on the futility of German Kultur in the modern technological world. His resort therefore is less to a notion of life-after-death than an attempt to obliterate the distinction between life and death itself. Here his writing bears an uncanny resemblance to Rainer Maria Rilke's explanation of his Duino Elegies. The comparison between Juenger and Rilke is more than fortuitous. Martin Heidegger was to see in Juenger's "worker" and Rilke's "angel" of the Duino Elegies, the two most authentic modalities of Nietzsche's superman transposed into the twentieth century world. In a letter to the Polish translator of the Elegies in 1926 ²⁵ Rilke touched on both these themes - the importance of the unity of life and death and of the necessity of invisibility. Death he claimed could no longer be seen as extinction but as an intensification of being. It was the other unilluminated side of life, an extension of life into the infinite. At the same time he claims to have gone beyond "Catholic conceptions of death, of the hereafter and of eternity". For in the modern age where "the familiar objects" of previous German generations had been submerged by American "dummy-life", by the false and synthetic products of modern civilisation, this extension of life into the infinite is possible only through invisibility. "Our destiny," writes Rilke "Is continually growing at once more actual and invisible within us.... The Angel of the Elegies is the being who vouches for the recognition of a higher degree of

reality in the invisible." ²⁶

For Rilke, invisibility is a metaphysical poetic conceit; for Juenger on the other hand, it is in the full military sense of the word, a tactical manoeuvre or a tactical retreat. The invisible Reich is the final resting home of all Germany's warriors, an atheistic Valhalla from which they inspire future German generations to sacrifice. The Reich is a Sorelian myth. Immune not only from attack and criticism but also from visibility, it produces a magical form of heroic death ancestry. If the dead have sacrificed themselves for the living, the living must in turn sacrifice themselves for the dead. The key to total mobilisation, to its historically endless recurrence, is the worship of sacrifice in previous generations, which in turn is the spur to sacrifice in the contemporary one. Total mobilization with all its totalitarian military and political ramifications, is the heroic attempt at the completion of a circle which can never finally be closed, a form of martyrdom in perpetuum mobile, where the already dead, with their impact upon living memory and the source of inspiration they provide for current sacrifice, are as alive as those who are currently engaged in the process of dying. The distinction between life and death is thus dissolved. The death of the individual no longer possesses any meaning. It merely represents a numerical deficiency of the warring community of which he is a part. For many, the Great War was the war to end all wars. The cry "No more War!" had echoed across the wasteland of Europe. For Juenger, however, it was merely a beginning.

The fighting organisation and the universal army

At this stage in Juenger's thought, there was an immense gulf between heroic realism and total mobilisation which had not been bridged. Total mobilisation involved the thrusting of whole populations indefinitely in the jaws of the modern technological war machine. Heroic realism was the precious creed of a Nietzschean fighting elite. Its hegemonic particularism is openly stated by Best in his inversion of the Kantian Categorical Imperative. The code of the fighter triumphantly discards its claim to universality. "Act", he proclaimed, "as though the maxims of your action ought, through your will, to become a law for those such as you."²⁷ The contradiction not only pointed out a problem in fascist doctrine but also in national-socialist practice. The amoral and brutal fighting traditions of the military outlaws of the twenties which Schmitt's doctrine of fighting and Best's doctrine of heroic realism seemed to legitimate, contrasted clearly with the professional code of the German army. From Juenger's point of view total mobilisation could only occur through the universalization of the army. War was still a military phenomenon. The private armies of Nazism, heir to the front-fighter myth and Freikorps nihilism, challenged the very legitimacy of the army itself. Ernst Roehm threatened that the grey uniforms of the Reichswehr would perish beneath the brown hordes of the S.A. In 1933, when Hitler had to tread the delicate path of power by alienating neither, Nazi ideologues were themselves worried by the seeming impasse this division created. Alfred Baumler sought to get round it in typical propagandist fashion by suggesting the unified lifestyle of the "political soldier."²⁸ Both soldier and Nazi fighter he claimed should equally be members of the mass movement as well as defenders of the state. The problem however seemed impassable and was only resolved in the Night of the Long Knives

when the Fuehrer decimated his own army partly in order to appease the professional army over which he had as yet no control.

Yet the very agent of this decimation was the one destined to maintain the distinction between fighter and soldier in a more ruthless rationalistic and methodical manner - the S.S. The transition from the S.A. to the S.S. was a passage from sadistic to rationally organised nihilism. What Juenger and his accomplices had accomplished in 1930 at the level of doctrine was accomplished four years later at the level of practice. And alone among the members of the Vormarsch circle it was Werner Best who went on to act out his visions of domination and the will-to-power on the field of history. In 1934 Best was recruited into the S.D. the security service of the S.S. by Reinhold Heydrich. It was perhaps the most elitist and intellectualist sector of any of the private armies of the Third Reich.²⁹ Not only did its young members have academic or legal training, they tended to have little or no connection with the political masses, a fundamental fact of life in nearly all the other Nazi organisations. Among them Best was to become the closest working associate of his master Reinhold Heydrich until the outbreak of the war. As Hans Buchheim has pointed out, if it is possible to talk about an S.S. ideology, it approximates most closely to the notions of heroic realism which Best brought with him into the movement.³⁰ What Best had emphasised for all ruling fighters and he saw the S.S. as an organisation of ruling fighters par excellence, was the plasticity of struggle. In its new institutionalised form, however, it also suggested a well-defined link between administration and violence. As one the chief ideological spokesman of the S.S. Best applied an institutionalized version of heroic realism to the ruling functions of the new political police in Germany. The Gestapo was the apotheosis of the fighting bureaucracy where no permanent bureaucratic rules for fighting existed.

"A legal standardisation of the changing technique of a political police is scarcely possible, just as it is impossible to envisage in advance the means used to attack enemies of the state and the types of danger which would otherwise threaten the state.... The concept of a political police springs directly out of the reality of this situation. As a special corps for the defence of the state it possesses a new and unique form. In the fulfillment of their bureaucratic duty, its members feel themselves to be comrades in a fighting organisation" 31

Best emphasises the limitless nature of fighting in the police state. In a situation where it is no longer possible to say what form of repression is possible, everything, as Hannah Arendt says, becomes possible. No form of imprisonment, torture, murder or genocide can be ruled out. Moreover the indefinite nature of fighting results in that other central aspect of totalitarian rule, the indefinite search for enemies. Enemies cannot finally be wiped out. They always continue to exist. Thus fictitious enemies are created after real ones have been eliminated and it is only when enemies are fictitious that the real momentum of extermination asserts itself. In this light Nietzsche's delirious cruelty and barbarism could only be seen as a nostalgia for a golden age of momentary and carefree conquest. In the twentieth century, barbarism had to be different. It must be rational organised and indefinite however monumental the task. Best's master, Heydrich, possessed the necessary attributes to link domination and heroic realism in the institutionalised context of the police state. As the first hand portrait of his ex-lieutenant Walter Schellenberg shows, he was master of intrigue as well as a predatory animal, ruthless calculating and methodical as well as instinctively cruel.³² One of the names by which he was known was "the blond Beast". But another was "Mr. Suspicion".

Information as well as fear, or more precisely, in collusion with it, was the primary yardstick of his totalitarian power.

The common historical experience in the age of ideology - the monster of practice broken free from its theoretical moorings also applied in the history of the German police state. Best presented that peculiar dilemma of the intellectual who despite his monumental contempt for intellect clung to the talents which it personally offered him. Having evinced a totalitarian contempt for all recognisable forms of legality in his essay for Juenger and having gone on to put his contempt into practice by contributing to the higher lawlessness of the S.S. state, he suddenly found that his own intellect and legal training still constituted a hindrance to the grand designs of his master. In 1939, as head of the legal and personnel sections of the political police, which were state rather than party organs, Best still believed that legal training and intellectual talent was necessary for organisational efficiency.³³ Heydrich, having built up a complex and monumental machinery of repression out of legal and intellectual talents such as Best, decided that such qualities were dispensable. Predictably defeated in the power struggle with Heydrich, Best left the Gestapo immediately prior to the period when, on the basis of principles which he enunciated, the S.S. entered its purple period of genocide and destruction. Having proclaimed that everything was possible in the field of unilateral fighting, Best was still horrified at what actually was possible. He ended the war as a kid-glove administrator in occupied Denmark, using his technical expertise to save a number of Danish Jews from the gas chambers. A man called Adolf Eichmann, horrified at such a sell-out, recalled the time when in 1939 he had heard Best give such stirring lectures on the functions

of the political police, and bemoaned the gall which with such an impressive ex-comrade could defy the dictates of the Final Solution. ³⁴ Heydrich, bereft of Best's intellectual background and his ideological flair, had no such qualms. In the decisive moment the man of action proved his will-to-power, and thence to destruction, more ruthless and thoroughgoing than his subordinate who had tried to link action with belief. That belief itself was however destined to failure. For it was a belief in the purity of activism, and as such pronounced itself superfluous. The process of the final solution and the consummation of totalitarianism was set under way by the activists and opportunists of power when the resistance of the ideology which supported it had finally collapsed.

While Best's version of heroic realism was essentially a doctrine of internal repression as function of the will-to-power, Juenger's vision of total mobilization invoked the spectre of all Europe as a permanent and ravaged battleground of matériel. No feasible distinction was possible any longer between internal and external violence, between revolution and counter-revolution on the one hand and total war on the other. Juenger's doctrine had in effect dissolved the boundaries of the nation-state, and with the concept of territorial limits and borders which is fundamental to the Clausewitzian philosophy of war. Clausewitz's idea that war was a series of distinct short term engagements to force the enemy to negotiate favourable political settlements was perhaps relevant to the absolutist state and the nation-state of the nineteenth century but not in Juenger's term to the technological wars of the twentieth. ³⁵ Juenger's vision of total and permanent war was designed to swamp the limitations suggested by Clausewitz and outline a gruesome prophecy

of this-worldly Armageddon. What distinguished him from the French prophets of total war a decade earlier - people like Alphonse Sechs, Georges Blanchon and Leon Daudet - was not merely the absence of horror which pervades all his writings, but the metasocial conclusions which he drew from it. He envisaged like Schmitt the possibility of a transition after the end of absolutism from a parvenu bourgeois society to a totalitarian state which in Germany, at least could destroy bourgeois society before it had really begun to assert its societal dominance. The age of neutralization which Schmitt saw as having dominated the west since the beginning of the nineteenth century could be reversed in a Germany which had trenchantly though unsuccessfully resisted embourgeoisement until 1914, by a societal process which instead of enlarging the power of bourgeois society, had the effect of destroying it. It was this process involving society, and in particular the fourth estate, which Juenger and subsequently Schmitt himself, saw as reinstating the sovereignty of the state. It was a form of sovereignty totally different from previous absolutist regimes, since in order to ensure its continued existence not only would it commit itself continually to total war but would also find in total war the suitable formula for the total state - namely the integration through statist domination, of state and society.

The concept of total mobilisation, which Juenger himself claimed was the most discussed and least understood aspect of all his work, found its greatest following outside his own immediate circle in the Reichswehr. It stimulated works by Ewald Banse and General Ludendorff on strategies of total war and also had a hold on some of the German generals who worked under Hitler - most notably General Georg Thomas, who became head of the newly formed Wehrwirtschaft (defence economy) Ministry created with a view to massive German rearmament. Thomas in fact claimed that he saw his role as building up a war-gearred economy

based on principles of total mobilisation within the context of the national-socialist total state.³⁶ His intentions however foundered in the interstices of the jungle of overlapping private empires operating in the Third Reich. Not only did he find himself at loggerheads with the other armed forces and with Goering's Four-Year Plan, but more fundamentally his plan for "armament in depth" completely contradicted Hitler's own war-plans. As far as future European wars were concerned, Hitler had taken the completely opposite view to Juenger, and wished to avoid the slaughter and stalemate of trench warfare at all costs. In addition he also claimed, according to Rauschning, not to see any change in the nature of warfare brought about by technological development per se. His own Blitzkrieg tactics of engineering lightning strikes when the enemy was militarily or diplomatically offguard, which were so immensely successful at the beginning of the war, flagrantly abused all notions of total mobilisation. His policy of wanting both guns and butter which operated until well into 1942, meant that Fritz Todt and later Albert Speer, his armament ministers, both found immense difficulties in ensuring desired production quotas of armaments, a difficulty much less apparent in the Allied countries and a distinction which seemed to bear out Juenger's own remark about the first world war of the ability of democratic society to create a total mobilization of resources.³⁷

When Speer as Minister of Armaments finally managed to switch the economy over to total war, after the disaster of Stalingrad in 1943, Germany was already a losing nation. The notion of total war, was in addition only resuscitated for ideological reasons when doom was apparent and when Goebbels recovered his role as a mass demagogue in the Berlin

Sportspalast by preaching the total equality of total destruction. Of all the major nations, Germany, the most ideologically receptive of ideas of total war among the great powers was politically and economically the least capable of achieving it when it really counted.

Schizophrenic Theory and Schizophrenic practice.

The practice of total war makes the dividing line between responsible and non-responsible, between justifiable and non-justifiable violence almost impossible to make. Mass bombings and mass infantry bombardments on both sides to some extent bore Juenger's prophecy and ravaged the cities and civilians of Europe. Yet despite the ruthlessness both of the Allies and the Axis powers in the military conduct of the war, it was Germany alone which created an independent S.S. army of over half a million men in addition to its mass professional army. The growth of the S.S. empire and its atrocities in Eastern Europe was the historical culmination of a legacy of violence which began on the Western Front and had its roots in authoritarian nature of German society. The Freikorps, the S.A. and finally the S.S. embodied the liberated brutality of two generations of an authoritarian self-hating bourgeois society. The end result was a schizophrenic division which has not been seen anywhere in the history of modern warfare. While the Wehrmacht fought against opposing armies, the S.S. "fought" unarmed populations and prisoners of war in territories already secured. The Komissarbefehl and the Final Solution demanded not heroism but rapid wholesale and efficient extermination of the already conquered.

In the service of Hitler's master-race hallucinations, the S.S. exhibited both the heroic tendencies of fighting against formidable enemies regardless of the cost to themselves, and also the genocidal tendencies required for the elimination of "subhuman" Slavs and Jews. On the Eastern Front especially, its main military force, the Waffen S.S. showed exceptional recklessness and courage in withstanding the counter-attacks of the Russian armies and fought on until its elite divisions had been practically decimated. As a spearhead of the military campaign, regarded with jealousy and hostility by the Wehrmacht, it almost seemed to replicate the elite storm battalions of the trenches in the first war. Nothing restrained its willingness for fighting as a form of sacrifice. At the same time nothing restrained its atrocities against prisoners and unarmed civilian populations. Its brutality made little or no distinction between armed enemies and the rest of humanity. At the most extreme point, pushed to the limits of its nihilism, heroic realism conjoined the heroic qualities of sacrifice with the anti-heroic qualities of systematic liquidation. While the Wehrmacht looked on in horror, the S.S. fighters committed atrocities which made its own courage meaningless and finally forgotten. In devaluing their own lives, they devalued the lives not only of their enemies but of mankind in general. The Nietzschean vision of the slaughter of the innocents had in historical reality reached gruesome proportions and fighting had become a travesty of its own nature. It found its true *métier* where it no longer had opponents but merely victims. In the secret police and the concentration camps, Best's devaluation of the values of fighting reached a logical extremity which entailed the end of

fighting itself. Rational and systematic liquidation was no longer daemonic, no longer threatened by the uncertainties of struggle. It was one-sided, machine-like and as Arendt claims, banal.

The doctrine of fighting had come full circle. Originating as a protest against the liberal and western repression of fighting, it paved the way for the most horrifying barbarities ever to be conceived of in fighting's name. Heroic realism, originating as the oppositional cry of repressed and exploited rulers, proclaimed that rulers themselves possessed a carte blanche for all forms of repression and exploitation within the bounds of possibility. And as Himmler himself had said, the word 'impossible' should never be heard within the S.S. The result was that the most articulate apostles of violence recoiled from the catastrophe which they had provided impeccable and original ideological sources. But while they experienced revulsion at racial genocide the opportunists, the indoctrinated faithful and the fighting bureaucrats experienced none. As a Wehrmacht officer in Paris during the occupation, Juenger owed his life to his ex-disciple Werner Best who had sought to give rein to his Nietzschean instincts in that very butcher's organisation which Juenger had claimed to detest. After the disaster of Stalingrad, plans had been mooted to eliminate intellectuals like Juenger and Hielscher who were considered a potential threat to national morale. 38 Best, then serving as a high-ranking S.S. officer in liason with the Wehrmacht in France, had intervened to save the lives of his old-time comrades by claiming that alive they were perfectly harmless and could do nothing. The ex-disciple thus aided his master by denying the power

of his influence. As a pure activist he felt contemptuous of activism's armchair advocates. But they were activists and activists. Three years earlier his own master had felt the same contempt towards him. His own legalistic and intellectualist temperament had itself constituted a brake on Heydrich's most ruthless plans of terror. Juenger and Best, at different times and in different circumstances had become victims of their own intellect. For what they had produced was a doctrine proclaiming all doctrine to be superfluous. They had thus theorised themselves out of existence. They had committed the ultimate intellectual auto-da-fé. Having set out confidently on the collective road to nihilism, they had suddenly found themselves flung by the wayside. Before the final genocidal forms of Nazi fighting had become reality, the fascist doctrine of fighting had consigned itself to dust.

NOTESCHAPTER X

1. A. E. Guenther "Der Intelligenz und der Krieg" in Krieg und Krieger, p.78. Berlin 1930.
2. *ibid.* p.77.
3. *ibid.* p.89.
4. "Die totale Mobilmachung", p.13-14.
5. Herbert Spencer Principles of Sociology 549; p.501ff (Abridged and ed. S. Andreski) London 1969.
6. Juenger *op.cit.* p.18.
7. For more detailed accounts of Rathenau and Moellendorf, see Charles S. Maier "Between Taylorism and Technocracy" Journal of Contemporary History vol.5, 2, 1970 p.46ff; Klemens von Klemperer, *op.cit.* p.58ff; for Rathenau's own account of the alliance of Prussianism and technocracy see Von Kommenden Dingen, p.64ff, p.139ff.
8. Hence the title of Moellendorf's book 'conservative socialism'; Konservativer Sozialismus, Hamburg 1932.
9. Maier, *op.cit.*, p.50.
10. Juenger, *op.cit.*, p.21.
11. See Schumpeter's essay of 1919 "Imperialism" in Imperialism and Social Classes.
12. "Voelkerrechtliche Formen des modernen Imperialismus" (1932) in Positionen und Begriffe p.179.
13. "Die Wendung zur totalen Staat" (1931) *ibid.*, p.152.
14. Juenger *op.cit.*, p.18.
15. *ibid.* p.15. On the general relation between military participation and societal change see Stanislaw Andreski Military Organisation and Society, Chapter 2. On the role of war in modern revolutions Katherine Chorley, Armies and the Art of revolution, London 1943.
16. Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis, Chapter 1.
17. Juenger, *op.cit.*, p.14.

18. "Das Krieg und der Recht", p.142
19. *ibid.* p.151.
20. *ibid.* p.152
21. Berlin, 7th October, 1930 in Mohler ed. Auf die Schleife, p.83-84.
22. Best, *op.cit.*, p.163.
23. "Zur Genealogie der Moral" in Werke (ed. Schlechta), vol.2,p.786.
24. Cited in Mohler, *op.cit.*, p.156.
25. Rainer Maria Rilke, Briefe, vol. 2. Letter to Witold Hulewicz, 13th Nov. 1925, p.483-484.
26. *ibid.*, p.484.
27. Best, *op.cit.*, p.159-160.
28. Alfred Baumler Maennerbund und Wissenschaft, p.143. Berlin 1934.
29. Heinz Hoehne The Order of the Death's Head (trans. Richard Barry), p.210ff; see also Schlomo Aronson "Heydrich und die Anfaenge des S.D. und der Gestapo, 1931-1935" Diss. Berlin 1966.
30. Anatomy of the S.S. State, p.327ff.
31. "Die Geheime Staatspolizei" in Zeitschrift fuer Deutsches Recht 1936, p.125ff.
32. The Schellenberg Memoirs, p.30ff.
33. Hoehne, *op.cit.*, p.254-258.
34. *ibid.* p.400.
35. Against Juenger's vision of total and permanent war, Clausewitz had stated "War is an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will.... The military power must be destroyed, that is, reduced to such a state as not to be able to prosecute the war." Carl von Clauswitz On War, p.123.
36. In an address to the Wehrmachtacademie in 1935 he stated "The communal basis of a national economy is the economic principle of the total state". cited in Berenice E. Carroll Design for Total War: Arms and Economics in the Third Reich,p.42. For a discussion of the influence of the idea of total mobilisation in the Reichswehr in the thirties see Hermann Rauschning Die Revolution des Nihilismus (5th ed), p.228ff.
37. On Germany's transition to total mobilisation during the war see Alan Millward The German Economy at War, London, 1965.
38. Hielscher, *op.cit.*, p.287-288.

CHAPTER XI

The World of Work and the Technological Superman

The break-up of the Vormarsch circle and the disintegration of the Peasant's movements produced a strong disillusionment with practical politics among the revolutionary-nationalists. This was enhanced in 1931 by the formation of the so-called Harzburg Front. This coalition between the Nazis and the bourgeois German nationalist party convinced the revolutionary-nationalists more than ever that national-socialism was a spent revolutionary force which had succumbed to the seductions of the democratic system. In this period, when Die Tat took over as the intellectual mouthpiece of the younger nationalist generation, Juenger gradually moved closer to the minority cult of national-bolshevism. A partial withdrawal from politics resulted in little decrease in literary output. The impending doom that hung over the Republic stimulated Juenger, as it did many other intellectuals, to greater heights of polemical achievement. In October 1932 when the republic was on the verge of collapse, his most complex and intellectually accomplished work was published by the right-wing Hanseatische Verlag in Hamburg. This was The Worker (Der Arbeiter)¹. With some publicity build-up, it became one of the most immediately controversial books of the year, running into several editions. At this time Juenger was at the height of his literary prestige due to the popularity of his front-writings and he had a potentially large audience for anything he published. In the long run, however, the book because of its abstractness and its complexity, produced disappointed reactions, and a mixed critical reception. Apart from the hostility of the left-wing press, Juenger found hostility from those he could consider to be on his own political flank. For the national-socialists the Voelkische Beobachter complained of "the endless

dialectical language" and while admitting that Juenger had produced a viable alternative to the Marxist conception of work, castigated him as a member of "an intellectual elite" who had little contact with the real German worker.² There was, by implication, little in Juenger's book to further the political interests of the national-socialists. Hostility however was also expressed among revolutionary-nationalist groups themselves, notably Harro-Schulzé Boysen's Der Gegner.³ Die Tat was non-committal. Oswald Spengler, one of Juenger's greatest mentors complained that he had been unable to free himself from the Marxist fallacy of regarding the worker solely as a manual worker while at the same time completely ignoring the peasantry.⁴ Almost alone, Ernst Niekisch hailed the work as a great event, but in terms of what he considered to be its absolute vindication of national-bolshevism.⁵

What had Juenger in fact set out to achieve? Many commentators followed Niekisch's own line and saw it as the crowning achievement of national-bolshevism. In it they saw an esoteric, Prussian justification of the process of the industrialisation and forced collectivisation undertaken by the Soviets in the first four year plan. But if this was so, it marked less the conversion of Juenger to Stalinism, however, than his conviction that the Soviet experience was a form of total mobilisation of equal stature and significance to the fighting of total wars. He saw it as one important aspect of the more universal impact of technology on the modern world. It was technology which led Juenger to national-bolshevism rather than vice versa. Whereas Niekisch had to change his vision of the "rural revolutionary east" in accordance with Soviet developments to a pro-industrial stance, this had always been Juenger's position and Stalin's Russia now fell neatly into place. The reason for Juenger's change, in fact, came about because of difficulties he felt to be inherent in his notion of

total mobilisation. In his earlier writing he had seen the basis of human praxis as fighting. In the wake of total war, however, there had emerged "universal armies of work". Bearing this in mind, Juenger regarded the purely instrumental nature of fighting as a subordinate aspect of the instrumental nature of work. Work as a whole in the modern world bore testament to what he called the "permanence of means" (Konstanz der Mittel). But it was constrained in the west by the decadence of bourgeois-capitalist society. Bourgeois capitalism did not constitute for Juenger a basic framework of the iron cage of bondage. Such a society could only be attained after the bourgeois age of modern Europe had drawn to a close. Juenger saw its destruction as imminent. But he still had to produce evidence of the forces which would destroy it.

It is at this moment that Niekisch's conception of bolshevism as "counter-movement to the West", takes on significance. Whereas Niekisch had originally conceived of the European West/East axis as being liberal-industrial/authoritarian-rural, Soviet industrialism radically altered this polarity. Juenger saw the Soviets as having revolted against the West by utilising the very basis of Western industrialism - technology. It had thus turned against the west and fought against it with its own weapons. It was not Niekisch, but surprisingly enough Carl Schmitt, who despite his reservations against bolshevism, took up this aspect of Soviet technology which impressed Juenger so much.⁶ Schmitt saw in Soviet Russia not a new type of economy but a new type of polity. He welcomed it as producing not a new type of society but a new type of state. Everyone knew of Lenin's statement that "socialism equals the soviets plus electrification" and the favour he showed towards Taylorism, the cult of technological efficiency in American capitalism.⁷ What was significant for Schmitt was that the technological impetus in Russia was not capitalistic as it

was in the west, but statist in the truest sense of the word. He saw statist technology, like total mobilisation, as a means of countering the neutralisation of the state - in his eyes, the infamous disease of all Western liberal societies. Irrespective of its specific internal or external policies, claims Schmitt, one thing was unmistakable, that "on Russian soil an antireligion of technology had been put into practice and that here a state had emerged which was more intensely statist than any of the states of the absolute monarchs such as Philip II, Ludwig XIV or Frederick the Great".⁸

In Schmitt's own scheme of things, technology played a crucial part in his revision of Comte's Law of the Three Stages. After the initial two stages of theology and metaphysics, Schmitt claims that in place of the transition to positivism, there were three further stages, each constituting the central organising principle of thought in its own century. In the eighteenth century it was the moral-humanitarian principles of the Enlightenment. In the nineteenth century, it was that of economism, the doctrine both of the English political economists and of Karl Marx, described pejoratively by Schmitt as "a typical clerc of the nineteenth century".⁹ In the twentieth century the economic class-struggle was superseded by technology. It is that point that Schmitt applies his model of political decisionism to technology. It is a feature of every age that it accepts as an eternal truth, the world-view which is dominant at that given historical moment. But according to Schmitt, there is no eternal truth in this sense. All concepts are polemical. At any given time they can be expropriated by political groups engaged in fighting for political power. Since political fighting is based on existential criteria, such expropriation obeys no laws of historical determinism. It rests on the pure decision

of the fighting political elite to utilise thought for its own purposes. In the first half of the twentieth century, technology was, in this sense open to expropriation. And it had been initially expropriated by the Western powers and put forward, ideologically speaking as manifestation of the Western idea of progress. In the modern age therefore through the polemical ascendancy of the Western powers it had not been possible to distinguish technology-in-itself from technology-as progress.

Schmitt then goes on to claim that it was the basic tragedy of the pre-war German intelligentsia that they had been unable in the matter of technology to distinguish ideology and reality. Put crudely, they had fallen victim to the Western polemics of "technology-as-progress". the politics of cultural despair and the resort of völkisch arcadian mysticism were due to the inability of German intellectuals to see that there were alternative forms of technology to that offered by west.¹⁰ Schmitt attacks Weber, Ernst Troeltsch and Walter Rathenau as being the great culprits of the German surrender to Western imperialist mythology. Weber, despairing of the retention of human qualities in the age of the rational machine and Rathenau, rambling on endlessly about the mechanisation of the soul, had perpetrated a fundamental delusion for a whole generation. According to Schmitt, Germany could use technology. The fashionable and to Schmitt's way of thinking, fatuous distinction between the organic and mechanical world, was a form of romantic escapism. There was a spirit of technology rich in future promise.

"The spirit of technology which has led to the mass adulation of an anti-religious this-worldly activism is spirit, perhaps a more evil and satanic spirit, but not to be dismissed as mechanistic and not to be attributed to technology. It is perhaps somewhat terrifying, but is not itself technical or machine-like. It is the belief in an activistic metaphysic, the belief in the limitless power and domination of men over nature, even over the human physis, in the unlimited "recession of natural boundaries", in unlimited possibilities for transforming the naturally constituted existences of men. One can call this fantastic or satanic, but not simply dead, spiritless or mechanised soullessness." 11

Schmitt envisaged the new revolutionary technological rulers of the twentieth century, those capable of mastering the demonic spirit of technology, as the exact antithesis of those traditionally conservative intellectuals whose fear at the spectre of nihilism was nothing more than panic at the threat posed by disorder to the status quo. They would emerge in the shadow of life, characterised by asceticism and poverty, and mistakenly identified by historians and sociologists, as a visible manifestation of the nihilism which they were attempting to surmount, in the same way that every revolutionary elite in Western history is initially identified with the disorder which marks its ascendancy to power. This demonic asceticism envisaged by Schmitt is the key to Juenger's acceptance of technology. It was more than an answer to Weber's sober pessimism about the growing disenchantment of the world. If rationalization had destroyed bourgeois humanism, it had also not destroyed the fascist demon. Within the limits imposed by technology, man's capacity for adventure and destruction and for the will-to-power were not diminished but enhanced.

In a sense Schmitt and Juenger were not alone in this unqualified irrational acceptance of the rational machine. The demonology of the machine-world was a constant preoccupation of European culture in the twenties. Even before the war Marinetti's Futurist manifesto had set the tone with its acclaim of war and destruction, its worship of "the nocturnal vibrations of the arsenals and the workshops before their violent electric moons; the gluttonous railway stations devouring smoking serpents factories suspended from clouds by the thread of their smoke...."¹² And later the German expressionists, playwrights like Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser, film-makers such as Fritz Lang enunciated the promise-threat of the machine world. For Lang in particular the overpowering dimensions and tyranny of the industrial metropolis had an electrifying fascination. In Russia too the Constructivism of Tatlin and

Leonidov expressed in architecture and theatrical design a worship of the sheer functionality of machine-made and machine-like objects.

The philosophical source of Schmitt and Juenger's vision of the domination of man over nature through technology lies in Henri Bergson's philosophy of the élan vital, the dynamic evolutionary process of motion in the universe. In Creative Evolution Bergson sketches a vision of all forms of life, plant, animal and human as being divergent biological forms of the same vital impulse possessing an internal coherence which enables it to triumph over matter:

"All the living hold together, and all yield to the same tremendous push. The animal takes its stand on the plant, man bestrides animality, and the whole of humanity in space and time, is one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death."¹³

Bergson later goes on to compare the energy of machines with that of men. He claimed that technological invention was the prime mode by which any age of mankind was retrospectively characterised, and regarded it as the highest form of human intelligence. At the same time the motor energy of the machine, as a product of human invention, parallels the motor energy of man and of nature. In a suggestion later taken up by Sorel in The Illusions of Progress, he sees technology as the human retention of life-energies that would be otherwise dissipated in nature. Technology was the highest human expression of the élan vital.

For Juenger too, technology was the highest human development of energy in the universe, to which all forms of knowledge and learning were to be ultimately directed. The milieu of technology is work. In the technological age work not only becomes sovereign over the face of the world but joins hands with other forms of natural and cosmic energy:

"Work is the tempo of the hand, of the head, of the heart, of life by day and night, of science, art, belief, worship and war. Work is the vibration of atoms and energy set in motion by the stars and the solar system."¹⁴

Work is that same "activistic metaphysic" which Schmitt had envisaged in the unlimited possibilities of technological domination over nature. Even for Schmitt, however, Juenger's formulation was too extreme. On the reading of the book he asked him: "Are you also characterising as work the circling of an angel in the firmament?".¹⁵ To Schmitt the question was ironic, but to Juenger it was utterly profound. Work was not merely a human activity. It was an expression of all forms of terrestrial and solar energy. Technology was a form of domination which placed man on a footing with the forces of cosmic energy. It was Nietzsche's will-to-power placed at the centre of the twentieth century world. The worker is the twentieth century prototype of the Nietzschean superman, and through technology human activity mirrors the forms of motion and energy in the universe itself.

The legacy of Nietzsche cannot be underestimated. As well as conceiving of the will-to-power as technology, Juenger is also heavily indebted to Nietzsche's metaphysical critique of bourgeois society. What is important here is not merely the superiority of Nietzsche over Marx, as Juenger saw it, but the fact that these two thinkers alone had fashioned the only alternatives to bourgeois society which possessed any authentic nature. Hugo Fischer, the absent-minded Leipzig philosophy teacher and national-bolshevist associate of Ernst Niekisch, whose work Juenger held in high esteem,¹⁶ fashioned the distinction crucial to Juenger's own thinking. It was the distinction between Marx's economic critique and Nietzsche's metaphysical critique of bourgeois society. Fischer claimed that Nietzsche was superior to Marx because he recognized that the class struggles of bourgeois society were a symptom of decadence and not its cause. Decadence, that ubiquitous offshoot of Christianity in Nietzsche's writing was more universal. It was a category according to Fischer, which was "both metaphysical and

sociological at the same time". It characterised any social reality which lacks the active driving force to establish a decisive domination over its own epoch.¹⁷ It is the malaise of a society which lacks any "real presence".

Fischer and Juenger applied this characteristic of decadence to the German nation-state of the nineteenth century. Instead of looking upon Bismarck as evidence of real domination, they saw him as fighting a heroic rearguard action against a money-dominated parvenu bourgeois class where ascendancy through the economic system drastically diminishes the importance of politics and the role of the state.¹⁸ Whereas modern critics see the Obrigkeitsstaat as resulting in a crucial debilitation of a democratic industrial Germany, the revolutionary-nationalists came to see it as consigned to impotence before the pernicious designs of the bourgeoisie. Germany's road to nationhood guided by the Prussian spirit, in reality signified the ascendancy of bourgeois society. Decadence as a prime feature of such a society is its failure to achieve constant domination. Juenger calls the age of the third estate "the age of pseudo-rule."¹⁹ Long before the war, Germany had become a colony of Europe in which real political domination had ceased to exist. What Schmitt had called the age of neutralisation is seen by Juenger as the age of atrophy of the will-to-power.

The metaphysical critique of bourgeois decadence as well as involving atrophy, also involves the process of levelling. Nietzsche's vision of democratisation is more radical than any of the later theorists of mass society who are ultimately indebted to him. Not only is the mass of the populace sociologically undifferentiated, the whole of bourgeois society is reduced to the status of the human herd.²⁰ The growth of the educational process in Western civilisation merely hastens the process of degeneration in which the intelligentsia and the decaying

ruling classes also share. Everything sinks into the decadence of sameness and attains its lowest common denominator in the morality of the herd. Juenger inherits this critique in his own vision of bourgeois society as a society of the masses. Unlike modern mass society theorists Juenger did not see individual and mass as irreconcilable opposites. On the contrary he saw mass behaviour as resulting from the very excesses of an atomic individualism. The bourgeois ideology of "humanity" portrays mankind as a cosmos of atoms. But idea and reality mutually contaminate each other. Bourgeois "society" is also composed of individuals arbitrarily thrust into random formations of structureless masses.²¹ All the public crowds and gatherings of bourgeois society are seen by Juenger as mechanical collective formations. Crowds, riots, political meetings, holiday festivals, mass jubilation at the outbreak of cessation of war are all a series of random and meaningless variations of the formlessness of the masses.²²

Social protest, instead of being an attempt to overcome decadence, and hypertrophy by seeking metaphysical domination over the present, is a form of romantic escapism, according to Juenger, which takes flight from the realities of everyday life. The real forms of conflict in bourgeois society, war and crime, which expose protest as an ersatz leisure occupation of the decadent, are ideologically concealed through techniques of social pathology, and hence explained away. They continue to exist, however, in the shadow of urban life and constantly threaten the fragile security of bourgeois life. Bakunin's lumpen-proletariat exerts a fascination for Juenger since it presents the continual threat of a phantom-like and sinister force of evil ready to strike to the rotten core of a decadent society.²³ In ghettos or side-streets, away from the masses with their public and organised demonstrations, they carry disintegration to its furthest point with their total absence of values. The criminal

carries on at the centre of the metropolis the work of the fighter at the front - the task of nihilistic destruction which finally brings bourgeois society to a close. The extreme antithesis of this underworld is the world of the bohemian salon where the Parisian heritage of art, creativity and controversy eke out its slow poison. The narcotic atmosphere of salon dandyism and fin-de-siècle decadence, which Juenger himself was feebly to emulate in German military uniform in occupied Paris a decade later, are the veritable death-throes of bourgeois society. For Juenger "the cultural (Museal) pursuit represents nothing more than the last oasis of bourgeois security."²⁴ The very conditions which stimulate the flowering of culture in late-bourgeois society are those which testify to its coming destruction.

Juenger's 'metaphysical' critique of bourgeois society, is among other things, an occasion for the familiar revolutionary-conservative attempts to overlook such mundane sociological factors as class antagonism, occupational differentiation and the dynamics of social change inherent in modern society. According to Juenger, social class, both as concept and reality, is a nineteenth century phenomenon. The proletariat is a degenerate mass formation. Contradiction, where it exists, is between the values of bourgeois society and the reality it embodies. Decadence is the state in which the values of progress, individualism and humanity no longer possess any metaphysical domination of the reality of bourgeois society. The idea of progress is helpless before the slaughter of the world-war, the idea of humanitarian reform helpless before urban criminality. Pacifism exists side by side with violence; the social discussion of salon literati coexists with political assassination in the streets.²⁵ The contradictions of force and legitimacy, blood and intellect, sex and love, state and society, the mechanical and the organic dominate the bourgeois world. Contradiction

in its multiple forms, prevents the creation of any authentic relationship to totality.

Such a relationship, Juenger claims, is only possible through a recognition of "the total character of work".²⁶ The totality of work metaphysically conceived eradicates the contradictory elements of bourgeois society. The citizen is to be replaced by the worker. Individuals in their composite masses are replaced by the uniform type. The romantic escapism of social protest is to be replaced by the heroic strivings, by day and night, of the adventurous heart which seeks out danger in the immense facticity of all it confronts. Salon culture long the centre of western civilisation is suddenly made to appear very provincial by the dynamic onslaught of technology. The theatres and museums of the bourgeois age are to be replaced by the workshops of the technological world. Upon the dissolution of bourgeois society, there will emerge instead a worker's state. Work, the activist metaphysic of technology, provides a totalitarian solution to the atrophy, the egalitarianism and the contradictions of bourgeois society which are all interrelated aspects of the disintegration of political domination. Work is human praxis, but contra Marx, precisely in its reified form. It depicts human activity twenty-four hours a day in the context of the organisational rationality of technological work. It is the consummation of the total rationalization of man in the western world. The liberalistic distinctions of bourgeois society between work and leisure, career and family, public and private life are to be finally swept away. The economic division of labour is superseded by the metaphysical totality of work. The distinction between instrumental and symbolic action is superseded by a totalitarian model of a purposive rationality which is itself symbolic. The permanence of means in the technological world results in work being both the activity and the life-style of the worker. The neutral spheres of bourgeois society

disintegrate. Culture, economics, morality, sexuality, no longer possess any autonomous meaning.

This quest for the totality of work is both metaphysical and sociological. It is less a question of creating a new reality than creating the circumstances under which men will perceive it. In his essay on total mobilisation Juenger had spoken of a new German ideology needed to generate total mobilization. Here he goes one step further. Total mobilization is to be generated by the perception of all praxis as work. It is to be achieved through what Juenger calls "the Gestalt of the worker". The term Gestalt, a semantic borrowing from the so-called Berlin Gestalt school of psychology at that time, is divested by Juenger of its psychological connotations. It is a tactical-metaphysical device arising out of his earlier preoccupation in the essay Total Mobilization with invisibility. The worker's Gestalt is the culmination of his attempt to create a new German ideology which to use Rilke's phrase was an attempt to find the truest form of the actual in the invisible. Juenger writes:

"As Gestalt we refer to the highest meaningful reality. Its appearances are meaningful as symbols, representations and impressions of this reality. The Gestalt is a whole which embraces more than the sum of its parts. This "more" we call totality....From the moment in which one begins to experience things in terms of a Gestalt, everything becomes Gestalt."²⁷

The Gestalt is an invisible meaning-endowing force which has an exclusive monopoly of the appearances of phenomena in the real world. Juenger's anti-causality leads him to reject the notion of historical sequence. In the world of work there is no cause and effect, but rather "impact and imprint" (Stempel und Praegung). Impact is the Gestalt stamping its imprint on the world. The action of stamping involves simultaneously meaning and power. It is the means by which Nietzsche's metaphysical will-to-power impresses itself on the real world in a way

specified by Nietzsche himself, but articulated even further by Juenger. "Interpretation", Nietzsche stated, "is itself a means of becoming a master of something.... the will-to-power interprets".²⁸ Juenger characterised this interpretive mastery of the will-to-power as legitimation.²⁹

Juenger's Gestalt legitimates all activity as work. But as a concept the Gestalt is itself a result of (its author's) "work". Juenger's definition is deliberately circular. The concepts describing work are the work of the author:

"All these concepts", Juenger writes in a footnote, "Gestalt, type, organic construction, total - are notabene there by virtue of being understood. They are of no concern to us as such. They can be forgotten or put aside without further ado after they have been used as dimensions of work, (Arbeitsgroessen) for the grasping of a substantial reality which exists in spite of and beyond every concept. The reader has to see through the description as if looking through an optical system." 30

While admitting the duality of subject and object, noumenon and phenomenon, appearance and reality, embedded in the mind's perception of its object, Juenger regarded the problematic philosophical aspects of this dualism as, tactically speaking, dispensible. The reduction of all forms of experience to a Gestalt is a tactical outmanoeuvring of the philosophical dualism in decadent Western metaphysics. Language is as purely instrumental as the technology mobilized by the Gestalt of the worker, even though by semantic designation Gestalt, it is the medium for conveying the nature of that reality. The Gestalt determining but not determined, real but invisible, explaining but inexplicable, is pure emptiness masquerading as the purity of form. Metaphysics is a tactical device for putting out of reach the prime reality of human experience and justifying its impact on the real world as inexplicable.

Where are the origins for Juenger's radical devaluation of metaphysics and the subsequent perverted identification of this devaluation with its essential value? The answer seems to lie in the

most highly developed metaphysical arguments in Germany at that time. In the biological vitalism of Hans Driesch for example, one finds a metaphysical explanation of the formative power of living organisms which rests on postulating a moving force without spatial character lying behind all the physio-chemical forces in the organism. This force Driesch first called a soul, then a psychoid and finally in Aristotlian usage an "entelechy".³¹ The entelechy, like the worker's gestalt does not itself act in space but "works itself into space". Lacking in spatial character, it is nonetheless the source of the active power of the organism in the real world. In the same way, the worker's Gestalt stamps its imprint on a world which it lies beyond and to which it is inaccessible. An even greater similarity with Juenger's concept is to be found in Oswald Spengler's idea of destiny, outlined in the first volume of The Decline of the West, where Spengler is mounting his mammoth onslaught on the idea of causality. Here destiny is:

"an organic logic, an instinctive dream-sure logic of all existence as opposed to the logic of understanding and of things understood....Causality is the reasonable, the law-bound, the describable, the badge of our whole waking and reasonable existence. But destiny is the word for an inner certainty that is not describable....We begin with the idea of destiny and only later when our waking consciousness looks fearfully for a spell that will bind it in the sense-world and overcome the death that cannot be evaded do we conceive causality as anti-fate and make it create another world to protect us from and console us from this."³²

Spengler goes on:

"Everything of which we are conscious, whatever the form in which it is finally apprehended....has a deeper meaning still, a final meaning. And the one and only means of rendering this incomprehensible comprehensible must be a kind of metaphysics which regards everything whatsoever as having significance as a symbol."³³

Juenger's Gestalt fuses the destiny-idea of Spengler with Nietzsche's will-to-power. The power of the Gestalt to stamp itself on the world is accompanied by an incomprehensibility which is only overcome by its symbolic manifestation in the real world. This same symbolic manifestation however

can only take place in its most instrumentally rational form. Juenger regards work-performance or efficiency (*Leistung*), the supreme criterion of organisational rationality as "an objective and factual symbol of the worker's Gestalt". The same criterion applies to machine-technology. It is purely symbolic.³⁴ The technological symbols of the Gestalt provide the worker with "the ritual forms of an alien cult". Instrument and symbol, life and cult are thus identical. And behind them the Gestalt is imperturbably indescribable. "A Gestalt cannot in the usual sense of the word be described....In so far as it is to be sought beyond the will and beyond historical development, it is also to be sought beyond values. It possesses no quality."³⁵ At this point Juenger's use of metaphysics outstrips that of Spengler and consigns it to nihilism. Spengler had believed in the idea of destiny as unamenable to causal reasoning and indescribable but yet all-pervasive. Destiny embodied a certain value and a certain truth. Juenger's Gestalt possesses none. It can only be known through the language which announces it. But as we have already seen the concepts of this language are dispensable, once the "reality" of the Gestalt is "known" through them. Yet in the real world this language is the key to technology's domination. For the main instrument of technology in the real world - the machine - is merely a symbolic accessory like man himself to the domination of the technological language of domination:

"Technology is the ways and means by which the Gestalt of the worker mobilises the world....technology in this sense is the domination of the language which is valid in the domains of work. This language is no less meaningful, no less profound, than that other sort which belongs not only to grammar but also to metaphysics. Here the machine just as much as man himself plays a secondary role. It is only the organ through which this language will be spoken."³⁶

Juenger has thus reduced the technological will-to-power to the presence of the very language which announces it. In the beginning was

the Word and the word was Gestalt. Juenger gloats over the spectre of emptiness like a god surveying the disaster of his creation.

It is at this point that totalitarianism enters the stage. The thoroughly determinate world of technology is at its core empty, governed by an existential indeterminacy which accords to the invisible Gestalt an unlimited and unquestionable domination. The elites of Schmitt's decisionistic world seem to linger invisible in the shadow, waiting to use the mythology of the Gestalt to their own purposes. The final proof of the domination of all totalitarian rulers rests on widespread ideological premises which deny their very existence. All men are assigned the status of workers. All fighting workers with their universal uniforms, with their guns, gas-masks and helmets are outwardly indistinguishable. The decadent functions of dress and costume so dear to the bourgeois "personality" are replaced.³⁷ Yet visible uniformity, one of the great symbolic devices of totalitarianism, conceals the hierarchical nature of the new order. For in the place of equality is to emerge a Nietzschean order of rank. Uniformity is part of the totalitarian propaganda of social equality: in truth it conceals a new hierarchy of command and obedience. For Juenger realised, from the Soviet experience, that Nietzsche's heroic defiance of all forms of popular sovereignty and his subjectivistic vision of the new superman, were unacceptable in the twentieth century technological world. The Soviets had only been able to destroy the principle of popular sovereignty with an ideology which in actual fact affirmed it. Hence we have Juenger's notion that the will-to-power must be refracted through the Gestalt of the worker, and all men, whatever their rank, are to be called "workers".

The universal order of rank circumscribes Juenger's concept of freedom. For him "freedom and obedience are identical". Freedom is to be found in the collective fulfillment of work obligations. Freedom is obeying.

The situation in which all workers dutifully gain their freedom by absolute obedience is called "a democracy of work". Juenger's calculated refinement of worthless definitions is like an aesthetic exercise in the abuse and betrayal of political language. No doubt he felt an intellectual satisfaction from carrying the ideological disease of the twentieth century to its reductio ad absurdum.

Juenger's argument is not without philosophical precedence. The locus classicus for identifying the forms of power which subservience can offer is in Hegel's discussion of the master-slave relationship in work in The Phenomenology of Mind. But his appropriation of it is a matter of expediency rather than philosophical argument. For the philosophical problems he himself is concerned with are largely those posed by Nietzsche in the context of the will-to-power. The use of terms such as freedom and democracy is an attempt to offset the impression that the will-to-power is a form of unilateral domination. Zarathustra's advice to his brother warriors itself hints at the means for doing this:

"Let your nobility show itself in obeying! Let even your commanding be an obeying! To a good warrior 'thou shalt' is more agreeable than 'I will'. And everything that is dear to you, you should first have commanded to you".³⁸

The identification of willing and commanding made by Nietzsche is the clue to Juenger's interpretation of the will-to-power as a question of obedience. In The Will-to-Power Nietzsche also claims that commanding and obeying are forms of struggle. The hierachical order of rank is "an unending process of the establishment of force in which the different contenders grow unequally". Here "resistance is present even in obedience."³⁹ Thus obedience for Juenger excluded neither domination nor fighting. It was rather inseperable from both of them and to be explained of the organisational necessities consequence of the development of the will-to-power.

The identity of domination and compliance in work is thus offered by Juenger as an alternative model of human relations to that of the social contract of bourgeois social philosophy:

"Each and everyone of us stands in a hierachical order and the leader is recognised as the first servant, the first soldier and the first worker. For this reason both freedom and order refer not to society but to the state and the model of its membership is that of an army, not a social contract. Hence our external power is at its strongest when there is no trace of doubt about leaders and followers.

This much must be realised: that domination and compliance are one and the same thing."⁴⁰

Juenger envisages the fulfillment of work tasks in terms of a form of fiefdom, in which the fief entails not only the necessity of obedience but also the certainty of domination. A series of hierachical orders ensue in which the worker is both active and passive, tyrant and victim in the service of technology. It is perhaps no coincidence that the historical impetus to the myth of the front-experience emerged from the junior officers of the German army. For here quite distinctly was that area of a chain of command where men of action have to consider unquestioningly the mandates for battle from their superior and carry them out with a ruthless domination of those under their command at the front. The experience of the middle organisational level where the premium of command and obedience are together at their highest point. Deprived not only of the power of political reasoning but also of that of conducting strategy, the domination of the officer is the impact his men create on the field of battle. Juenger obviously saw an analogy in the work-team in the Soviet five-year plan and referred in passing to the construction of whole townships by forced labour in Siberia as a similar form of domination in the world of planning. What is quite clear from his use both of military and economic examples is the rationalisation of the life-experience of the middleman in the chain of political command.

The talk of domination is not the domination of elites; compliance is not the compliance of the totally powerless. It is part of the life-style of the worker that he experiences both. The worker is thus in many ways a technocrat placed in a position of control through expertise. Yet he is partisan and activist. Danger rather than organisational predictability is the immediate experience confronting him. He is both tyrant and victim - in terms of the Great War an almost inevitable casualty of his own courage, in Soviet terms technologically necessary and at the same time likely to be liquidated. The universalisation of the worker is thus a universalisation of the life-experience of what might literally be called a technological "middle-class" - obedient to the dictates of the political which lie outside its control and enabled by the existence of such dictates to exercise domination through ruthless expertise on those made subordinate to it by that same elite. One of the obvious fascinations of the Soviet system for Juenger was the fact that the professional and technological skills which made for the security of bourgeois citizenship and gentility in the west were rendered invalid by the political demand for achievement and the constant fear of liquidation.

It was not Juenger however but Niekisch who directly paid glowing tribute to the Soviet Union. In this of course he followed in the footsteps of Western intellectuals with convictions more humanitarian than his own. He did it for precisely the opposite reason. Juenger and Niekisch were decidedly much nearer the truth in realising what was going on, and that rather than any enchanted myopia the reason for their praise. Niekisch after a visit to Moscow in 1933 used the exact vocabulary of Der Arbeiter in singing his new-found praises. Russia was "a workers' state" characterised by asceticism and total poverty. The Russian worker was a "new type" who had found in the rhythm of the

machine the basis for the fusion of the mechanical world with the living organism of the state. The liquidation of the Kulaks meant that "the city controlled the land just as technology controlled nature." The symbolic nature of technology in the Juengerian canon was not lost on Niekisch either. "Russia's production figures, achievement schedules for factory employees, the work-gang, the Kolkholz are the ikons, the holy scriptures, the religious characteristics of the solemn exaltation of this modern state.",⁴¹ he wrote. Yet his own weird pietistic brand of protestantism became something of a dead letter in Juenger's anti-Christian world of technology where churches were museum relics to be razed to the ground and the sacraments of altars and candles had been replaced by the sacraments of motorbikes and machineguns. As well as the destruction of the last oases of bourgeois security, the domination of technology also entailed for Juenger the destruction of the peasantry and with it the last arcadian utopias of natural uncorrupted man. So much for Juenger's support of the peasant's movement in Schleswig-Holstein. Conservatism could have no more to do with the mystic rural east either. It must accept technology or perish:

"To the extent that the peasant is in the service of a machine one can no longer speak of a peasant class....(the peasant) is a worker under special circumstances who collaborates in the destruction of the standische order like his forefathers who departed more immediately into industry. The new formulation of the problem to which he sees himself resigned is the same for him as it is for the industrial worker, namely to act on behalf of the Gestalt of the worker or be annihilated....The famous distinction between town and country remains today purely in the realm of the romantic; it is as invalid as the distinction between the mechanical and the organic world."⁴²

Political liquidation had joined technological destruction as a fundamental feature of Juenger's world and stood as a new test of courage for his ruling slaves. While his language never approximated to the rhetorical cant of Soviet Marxism which he found tiresome and the tedious

dialogues of party secretaries which he deplored and the message was very similar. His own original death-language put him beyond the bounds of orthodoxy, but official Stalinist pronouncements were to be found which approximated to his own heresy. The universality of work as a sound principle of totalitarian despotism was pronounced by the chairman of the Soviet state planning commission in the official foreword to the second Five-year plan:

"Owing to the defeat of the parasitic classes, the Soviet Union has become a country where everybody works, where the possibility of parasitic existence has been finally and completely eradicated." 43

Where he differed most fundamentally was not from the convoluted dialectics of the 'theory' of non-antagonistic contradictions or the recurrent semantic hammer-blow of that magic word class-struggle but from his distancing from the major political problem of the Soviet Union - to ensure by coercive means that the party alone incorporated the true historical legacy of creating a socialist society. For Juenger history and party were of as little consequence as socialism. The power-struggles of party elites had evaporated behind the mythical Gestalt of the worker, and history in its turn was only a form of mythology which had no real continuity no real causality, but only a tactical-metaphysical use as a clarion call to death and sacrifice. History was to be part of the timeless myth of the Gestalt of the worker. No true knowledge of the past was possible and no rationality contra Marxist historicism and liberalistic progress could be attributed to its merging with the present. A Gestalt is independent of all historical development (Entwicklung). It simply exists. "A Gestalt is and no historical development augments or diminishes it." This radical devaluation of history allows conservatism to absorb the dynamics of history without according to them any intrinsic meaning. The transformations of the technological world

suggest upheaval and order, disintegration and homeostasis.

Conservatism's greatest enemy, historical telos, whether in its unilinear or dialectical form, has been finally severed from those very processes which its advocates have relied on to validate it. For Juenger, technological destructiveness represents the key to the solution of the problem of human order.

The organic world of destruction

In his war-writings there emerged from Juenger's pen a very precise and calculated image of the technological battlefield as both metaphor and model of a new human order. Total war above all else ensured the absolute interdependence of the different functions of work. The metaphor of the gigantic volcanic forge of the warring nation as a whole extended even further Juenger's vision of a new organic world. To the dimensions of total war, he now added the dimensions of total planning. In his own totalitarian vision of the future, they became interdependent and inseparable. Despite the fact that total wars were to be fought by nations with very different political and economic systems, despite the fact that Stalin's "socialism in one country" was a policy of external disengagement while collectivisation was under way on the home front, Juenger claimed that "the war-front and the work-front were identical". The war-plan and the work-plan were indispensable allies in the task of "organic construction". Juenger's model of the organic world was not the traditional conservative notion of a natural order. It possessed no primordial forms of natural social harmony. The organic world had to be constructed by mechanical and technological means. All forms of tradition custom and honour normally associated with conservative visions of the world were thus dispensable. Inherited wealth and privilege traditional forms of status and honour were all in the interests of

organic construction to be swept away for good. What held the world together was war. In his rage for total order, Juenger wished to turn the world into a total and permanent battlefield. With uncanny insight he uncovered one of the appalling truths of his century - the unlimited possibilities of global destructiveness. Within the arena of fascist contempt, however, this was not a cause for despair but one for rejoicing. In the same way that Schmitt could speak calmly of murder as if it were a necessary consequence of existential analysis, Juenger derived his pleasure from implicating all mankind in the misfortunes and cruelty of total war. The combat zone could be anywhere, violent death the fate of anyone irrespective of morality or privilege:

"In these zones there is de facto no distinction any more between combattants and non-combattants....In total war, every city, every factory is a fortified location, every merchant vessel is a warship, all provisions are contraband, all forms of behaviour active or passive have a military significance. It is of secondary importance whether the type is a soldier or an isolated person - he will be confronted in the attack on the particular area in which he is located. This is the feature of a very intensive but very abstract cruelty."⁴⁴

This abstract cruelty which prophetically enough was to reach its zenith in the civilian bombings of the second world war, is the absolute guarantee that there is to be no escape for the innocent, and that the random and arbitrary nature of violent death does not lack a supreme technological rationale. The idea of fate has fallen into the hands of the armchair sadist by courtesy of the destructive technological capacity which rests at the fingertips of military planners. Although Juenger claimed that society would be liquidated in the worker's state, it remains a repository for potential victims. The work-plan is its perfect complement. Divested of all its humanitarian connotations, of the pleas for social justice or economic improvement, and of the millennial

historicist assumption of creating the final stage of mankind, the plan is a pure experimental expression of the permanence of means, and through it of the will-to-power. From the action of the worker subject to the endless self-perpetuating tasks of the plan, language itself is abolished. The discussion of goals is not heretical; it is meaningless. Total involvement in the plan does not mean participation but merely factual achievement. All relevant questions are questions of organisation not of values. Hence the worker's achievement without any conceptual attributes, so that in a very cogent sense, the type is a supporter of a revolution sans phrase." ⁴⁵ Work is a preparation for sacrifice and death. In building his destructible fortresses, or constructing his own prisons, the worker erects his own gallows and digs his own grave. At the height of collectivisation in Russia Stalin had shown how the novelties of planning could work in the interests of stimulating loyalty and effort. He had purged his technocrats, and found they were others clamouring to take their place. Liquidation meant dynamic renewal and sacrifice. But it pointed in no direction and instead gave the lie to the ratio of history. Plus ca change plus c'est le meme chose; - the final hope of revolutionary conservatism.

By this time the remnants of Juenger's nationalism which had been the original rationale not only for his own but for European fascism as a whole, had gone almost without trace. The bourgeois nation-state including the Germany for which he had fought so fiercely in the Great War, was regarded as incapable of unleashing the dynamic totalitarian impetus of technology. Nationalism, the slogan under which the front-generation had been baptised was a dead letter. Germany was to be the centre of a technological world-empire geared to permanent war against the west:

"Technology as the means through which the Gestalt of the worker is mobilised is world-revolutionary. The type who uses this Gestalt to establish itself as the ruling race is world-revolutionary. The secret development of such means, of the appropriate scientific and military resources, is directed towards the domination of continents from pole to pole. The altercation between different ways of life takes on the character of a world war."⁴⁶

Juenger had taken Nietzsche at his word and decided that in the century of nihilism the new ruling race of technological supermen should become "masters of the earth". Nietzsche in a classic sense was interested only in victory. The wager he laid upon his ruling race in The Will to Power was to survive in toto the millions of deaths in which it had conspired. It was a wager which Hitler could be said to have fought and lost disastrously - to have committed genocide and then to be destroyed. For Juenger however technology prevented the vision from being so absolute. He attempted to institutionalise the eschatological madness of Nietzsche's final dream. There was no final flourish of the will-to-power. Heroic realism meant the acceptance of defeat and victory alike. The permanence of technological means subverted eschatology. While whole nations were to be conquered and re-conquered, populations enslaved and deported, and all human rights destroyed, Juenger's prophetic vision lacks Nietzsche's capacity for triumphant delirium. "Whoever wins or loses", he notes with an icy calculation, "is of no consequence. Defeat and victory alike herald the domination of the worker."⁴⁷

Juenger's worker in fact, just like Spengler's Prussian socialist but in a more exact sense, was a degenerate form of Nietzsche's superman. The superman was the heroic man-God, the invincible ego-dream of the lone prophet in defiance of all forms of human collectivism and the morality of the herd. Nietzsche's resistance to the utopian promise of language in religion and ideology was a form of personal defiance of everything

outside of himself. It was the triumph of subjectivism within which his unbounded contempt for humanity had flourished. More than any other modern philosopher he is closer to the solitary harshness and suffering of the artistic creator. His demonic embrace of evil bespoke a reverence for the purity of language no longer possible in an age of total ideological dishonesty. On all these counts Juenger betrayed his master. He used technology to eliminate the subject from the centre of the Nietzschean discourse and create his own depersonalised herd of garrisons and armies. He replaced Nietzsche's philosophy of life with a model of the state, "that cold monster", as Nietzsche had called it. He did it too with the same lie which Nietzsche attacked. "Coldly it lies too; and this lie creeps from its mouth: "I, the state, am the people!"⁴⁸ He treated language with a cynicism of a satiated voyeur gloating over the political and ideological betrayals of his age. The meaning of words was of secondary importance to the effect they produced and one of the liberating features of technology was that anyway language would become superfluous. Juenger's faceless worker-type is not a ruler in Nietzsche's sense but a technocratic vassal, whose task and purpose is "revolutionary legitimation". It is as vassals that Juenger's workers roam the industrial landscape as "sons, angels and archangels of godlessness", through temperatures of "fire and ice".⁴⁹ Domination is part of the military-technocratic transaction of the fiefdom and the fighter remains in the bondage of his iron cage. Caught in its vice-like grip, the superman succumbs to the organisational mandates of a debased technological rationality.

In a landscape ravaged by war, the relentless task of organic construction presses on. While whole cities are razed to the ground, whole territories are transformed into planned technological landscapes. War and planning, destruction and construction, feed off its other

virtues. If nothing is planned, there is nothing to destroy; if nothing is destroyed there is nothing to plan. Organic solidarity emerges at the height of global destructiveness. But what is the height of global destructiveness? In 1932 Juenger could do no more than hint at, in a passing reference to atomic physics, the familiar and horrific destructiveness which was later to emerge with the invention and production of nuclear weapons. As a logical development of technology in its global dimension, it made the second world war the last global confrontation of its kind. It was America and Russia not Germany who emerged as the two great technological world-empires. Their possession of nuclear arms drastically altered the rules for feasible conflict and so created the Cold War. The type of military conflict which Juenger envisaged had been replaced by the ideological war of words he detested and by the types of subterfuge and subversion at the territorial fringes of the new empires which dispensed with the set-piece conventions of the war of material. To compare his own vision against that of reality is to realise that even in the process of destruction, the best or rather the worst demonic aspirations can themselves be betrayed. In Germany itself Juenger had been betrayed by racial and biological criteria of liquidation. The destruction of a single racial category of human beings contradicted the universal cruelty of technology. In a less provincial sense nuclear weapons were a betrayal since they lent themselves to the possibility of final destruction, a state-of-affairs which would deprive the future generations of the chance being born into a world of liquidation and sacrifice. The radical nature of Juenger's fascist contempt cannot be underestimated. The permanence of technological means gave men's capacity for self-betrayal and cruelty an indefinite opportunity to assert itself. Nuclear destruction, though a possible manifestation of this, would bring all such opportunities to an end.

A more radical notion emerges however than even this. It is the

possibility that permanent technological war and final nuclear war both contain in different way the same possibility - namely the abolition of man. In the closing section of The Will-to-Power Nietzsche had endeavoured to present the basic stimulus of human life as almost a mirror-image of the motion of energy in the universe. It was an eternal recurrence or as Nietzsche called it "the nothing eternally". For Juenger global technology is the highest expression of the eternal recurrence. Endless wars, endless sacrifice, endless construction of work-plans on a ravaged human landscape earmarked for destruction are a transcription of Nietzsche's words "the sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing, eternally flooding back.... enclosed by nothingness as by a boundary". Here the world was "a monster of energy without beginning without end....beyond good and evil".⁵⁰ For Juenger total war with its almost abstract symmetry of fire and movement, was not a conflict between men but an expression of a cosmic opposition between solar and terrestrial fire.⁵¹ Technology as the highest form of human creation represented man's greatest emulation of solar fire - of the explosiveness on earth paralleling the explosions of natural energy in the solar system. It is only one step further to see the possibility of nuclear war, the supreme form of technological destructiveness, as the most advanced and the final human emulation of solar fire. Nietzsche's vision of the world as a monster of energy beyond good and evil had found its ultimate point of reference. Juenger's astonishing definition of work as "the vibration of atoms and energy set in motion by the stars and the solar system" finally achieves a horrifying clarity. Man at last had finally managed to emulate the cosmos but only in its destructiveness. Technology had achieved its highest potential only at the expense of his probable extinction. Juenger's dubious achievement had been, before the invention of atomic warfare, to start thinking the unthinkable. The logic of his argument leads to the

affirmation of nuclear extinction.

Yet there is an uncanny sense that the end result of nuclear war - the final abolition of man - already exists in Juenger's work without regard to the knowledge of atomic weapons he could not possibly have possessed. The acceptance of technological rationality, the designation of man as a mathematically predictable type governed by technological metaphysics involved the renunciation of the subjective ego as the centre of the Nietzschean will-to-power. The will-to-power was no longer psychological, or rather no longer a metaphysic of the ego. In his essay On Pain written in 1934, Juenger finally reduced his ruling-slave of technology to a pure victim of the will-to-power. The subjective correlative of the technological world was no longer psychological - not heroic realism or the adventurous heart. It was physiological - it was pain.⁵² Pain was the summit and totality of the collective human experience of technology. It was the only effective guarantee of the final abolition of values. The collectivistic depersonalised experience of pain was in the province of the body alone. The body was the last tactical outpost against the abstract cruelty of technology. Having already attempted to abolish language, Juenger takes the next logical step of attempting to abolish human experience.

Juenger thus destroys the last human qualities of the worker and transforms him into an object, a thing. Those last qualities were the demonic and destructive ones which paradoxically had assured him of his humanity. For Juenger, having attempted to abolish philosophical dualism with all the subtle panache of a machine-gunner in a firing squad, is forced back onto his own fundamental dualism - that of the demon in the machine. As a mathematical cipher the worker is predictable and uniform. His actions are those of an automaton - calculable and precise. As the lackey and victim of technology's abstract cruelty - of total war, forced

labour, deportations purges and liquidations, he is the satanic beast of the twentieth century. As victim alone with pain as his only consolation, however, his final demonic qualities are lost. Juenger's vision of that of hordes of pack-marching phantoms treading the rubble of Europe, disappearing and re-appearing in the final apocalypse he was not yet to know, amidst the deadly bloom of radioactive dust. It was as if they had achieved through dehumanisation the permanence of an abolition which thirty years later in 1962, could well have been achieved in one decisive death blow. Technology, the metaphysics of reality which had abolished the metaphysics of philosophy, had finally fulfilled itself. It was, in its quest to perfection, the elixir of living death. In 1932, man for Juenger, had already died. Nuclear war could only be a posthumous tribute to his extinction. And nothing, God or man, could be left in the solar system to applaud the final achievement of attempting in a self-abolition to rival the intensity of solar fire.

In one sense however, reality never lives up to chiliastic expectation. The Cold War stabilised imperial boundaries and instead unleashed a torrent of words which had hoped once and for all would be silenced. For despite Juenger's contempt for the secular millennialism of the revolutionary left, Juenger was millennial with respite to his own obsessions. The permanence of technological means while admitting of no historical finality did at least mean liberation from language. But in the ideological war of words which has characterised the second half of the twentieth century, language, the receptacle of lies, distortion, half-truth and doublespeak returned with a vengeance. The Orwellian doublespeak, with Juenger himself used quite brazenly he thought merely as a temporary device to spur humanity along the road to nothingness. It was an incidental prelude to the revolution sans phrase. Thus he became quite open about reversing the meaning of words. In Germany in 1932, the two great emotional codewords in politics were nationalism and socialism and the Tat circle took seriously

the task of finding some common basis of unity between the two. For Juenger however they were only important as the opposite of what they meant. Hence he claims "socialism appears the precedent for a distinctly authoritarian form of organisation, nationalism as the precedent for tasks of an imperial nature". While Hans Zehrer regarded it as a worthwhile and intrinsically fruitful intellectual exercise to destroy the linear spectrum of politics with its left and right and show the points of similarity between the extremes, such a task would have a purely instrumental purpose in separating out those who could be creamed off for a totalitarian movement unconcerned with political labels from the equivocators who clung to the democratic system. Meanwhile his last perverse allegiance to language reflects itself in the style of his work. Calling it "a soldierly exercise" it is designed even more than Nietzsche's Twilight of the Idols to be an example of how to philosophise with a hammer. Juenger's inventory of italicised concepts, resembling a taxonomy of abstract species rather than a philosophical argument, is hammered out with the monotonous repetition of commands barked out on the parade ground. Unlike his war-memoirs where his language ebbs and flows poetically with the movement and violence of the horror it depicts here it moves with the facility of nails being hammered into a coffin. Inside the coffin itself the language of controversy and inquiry, of man's ability to question himself had been entombed.

Even in totalitarianism, above all in totalitarianism, language became necessary. It sprouted during the cold war like a many-headed hydra. In the modern world it seemed the tradition of fascist contempt was carried on by military dictatorships either too lazy or ideologically illiterate to join in the clamour of all other potential or actual oppressors to be acting in the interests of goodness and humanity. It was absurd for Mussolini to deny his fascism. He had after all practically invented the term himself. But who half a century later with similar aims, would in their right political minds embrace a concept which had fallen into such disrepute? The devaluation of words is a result of the persistence of

concepts, when the original reality they embodied has been forgotten. In the modern world few have escaped the accusation of fascism and even fewer have failed to vehemently deny it. The destruction of fascism in 1945 destroyed at least provisionally its basic reality but freed the concept from its historical moorings. The inflation of its use as abusive epithet has increased in proportion to the sensitivity of men in the present age to its accusations. Prior to 1945 to have called a convinced fascist a fascist would have been neither an accusation nor an insult but a compliment. It only really worked as the German communist party discovered early on when you called your non-fascist opponents fascist. Thus the German social-democrats fighting an ineffectual rearguard action against Hitler received for their pains the puerile epithet of social-fascist from those who ought to have been fighting by their side. The devaluation of fascism was inaugurated.

If language is still in use however as a free agent, if it has not been reduced to an ideological staccato hollow and without resonance, there is always hope for its authenticity. Too much language however meaningless is better than no language at all - or rather than a purely technical language which amounts to the same thing. For this was the final consequence of Juenger's precious contempt. Gloating over the endless betrayals of language, that ideological quicksand which drove humanists like Mannheim to distraction, he toyed pleasurably with the idea of getting rid of language altogether, by sealing it once and for all into the technicity of technology. He was able to live in happiness with the thought which drove Alfred Seidel to his death - the thought of consciousness as doom. With this the absolute vindication of nihilism, the final demonic element disappears from Juenger's work. In the late twenties in Berlin the cult novel of his circle had been Dostoevsky's The Devils. How could the revolutionary-nationalists sated by their

obsessions with violence fail to identify with the metaphysical revolutionary demons of Dostoevsky's mystic and chiliastic east? Who then, did Juenger most resemble, or perhaps even identify with? Not Stavogrin, not Verkhovensky, not Shatov, but Shigalev, pedantic prophet of a new age of technological despotism and slavery, who forecast the Stalinist Russia where nine-tenths of the populations were in slavery to their new industrial masters. But Shigalev was no murderer, no revolutionary. He was the agent not of the devil but of universal despair. Juenger drew the necessary conclusions. Life was a lifelessness where even the devil was excluded. Nietzsche's nihilistic utopia of the world as "a monster of energy beyond good and evil" was a world where the will-to-power was deprived of all telos human or divine. It was cosmic energy which man could rival through technology for a brief moment before his own extinction, but which had no need of either man or God. Nietzsche's desire to replace man and God by his own man-God itself becomes in terms of Juenger's dehumanised worker an ultimate heroic defiance by metaphysics of its own destruction. Beyond good and evil, there is something over which technology alone has a brief historical mastery. There is death.

Chapter XINotes

1. Der Arbeiter; Herrschaft und Gestalt. Hanseatische Verlag Hamburg 1932
2. See the review by Thilo von Trotha, Rosenberg's associate editor, in Voelkische Beobachter 15/11/32
3. For an extended discussion of the reception of Juenger's book, see Schuddekopf op.cit. p.259 ff. and Schwarz op.cit. p.290-291 n 53
4. Spengler Briefe 5th September, 1932 pp 667-668
5. Widerstand 10; 1932 pp 307-311
6. "Das Zeitalter der Neutralisierung und Entpolitisierung" (1929) in Der Begriff des Politischen (Berlin 1963)
7. "The Taylor system is a combination of the subtle brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of its greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work....We must organise in Russia the study and the teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our purposes." 'The immediate tasks of the Soviet government' April 1918 in Selected Works Vol. 2 p.327
8. Schmitt op.cit. p.80
9. ibid. p.86
10. ibid. p.91 For an extended Voelkisch statement of the incompatibility of technological progress and organic life, see the work of Paul Krannhals Das Organische Weltbild; Grundlagen einer neuentstehenden deutschen Kultur 2 Vols. Munich 1928
11. ibid. p.93
12. F.T. Marinetti 'The Futurist Manifesto' in James Joll Intellectuals in Politics appendix p.181ff.
13. Henri Bergson Creative Evolution p.108
14. Der Arbeiter p.65
15. See Juenger's wartime Paris diary Strahlungen p.364
16. A brief portrait of Fischer is to be found in Niekisch's memoirs, op.cit. p.197f.
17. Hugo Fischer Nietzsche Apostata Leipzig 1931 p.15 ff.
18. ibid. p.65
19. Der Arbeiter p.13

20. Fischer op.cit. p.108; for Nietzsche's attack on decadence see The Antichrist p.6 p.17 p.31 pp. 50-54 For his attack on the mediocrity of a democratised culture see 'What the Germans lack' in The Twilight of the Idols.
21. Der Arbeiter p.21 f.
22. ibid. p.54, p.110
23. ibid. p.49
24. ibid. p.249
25. "Ueber dem Schmerz" in Blaetter und Steine p.171 ff.
26. Der Arbeiter p.190 f.
27. ibid. p.295 p.32
28. The Will-to-Power London 1968 Aph. 643 p.342
29. Der Arbeiter p.70
30. ibid. p.
31. Hans Driesch Philosophie des Organischen Vol. 1 p.139 ff. For a discussion of Driesch and the German school of biological vitalism see Ernst Cassirer The Problem of Knowledge; Philosophy and Science since Hegel p.188 ff
32. Spengler The Decline of the West Vol. 1 (Trans. by C.T. Atkinson) pp 117-118
33. ibid. p.163
34. Der Arbeiter p.72
35. ibid. p.80
36. ibid. p.150
37. ibid. p.120f.
38. "Also Sprach Zarathustra" Werke VI p.55
39. The Will-to-Power aph. 364
40. Der Arbeiter p.13
41. Niekisch Gewagtes Leben p.225
42. Der Arbeiter pp 72-73, p.160
43. V.I. Mezhlauk. Intro. The Second Soviet Five-Year Plan London 1937 p.8
44. Der Arbeiter p.79

45. *ibid.* p.143
46. *ibid.* p.147
47. *ibid.* p.217
48. "Also Sprach Zarathustra" p.57
49. Earlier in 1925, Juenger had claimed that Nietzsche's "renaissance landscape" predated the advent of the machine. "Die Maschine" Standarte No. 15. Dec. 1925 p.2
50. The Will-to-Power aph. 1067 p.549-550
51. Der Arbeiter p.105
52. "Ueber dem Schmerz" in Blaetter und Steine p.13, p.151 ff.

CHAPTER XIIThe Salon and the Swastika

Revolutionary-nationalism could never have been considered at any time an important political force in Germany. Its brief hour of political glory came during the short-lived terrorist phase of the Peasants' movement. Born out of the Freikorps movement, its ideological impetus developed when the Freikorps had ceased to be a political force. Possessing a rather loose unity during the period of the Vormarsch circle in the late twenties, its coherence and sense of purpose disintegrated almost completely before the onrushing tide of national-socialism sweeping Germany after the Great Depression. Old Groups split and new groups arose. Sectarianism and fissiparity went hand in hand. The popular success of national-socialism and its policy of official legality alienated many revolutionary -nationalists. There ensued a small number of ideological conversions of right-wing activists like Bruno von Salomon, Lieutenant Scheringer, Beppo Roehmer and Bodo Uhse to the Communist Party. In general with the growth of national-bolshevism cautiously encouraged by the party for tactical reasons, relations with the Stalinist left became more favourable. At the same time, as the work of Juenger and Niekisch clearly shows there was no question of the revolutionary-nationalists accepting Marxist doctrine in any shape or form. They remained committed to some version of a counter-revolutionary Prussian socialism. Their increasing favourability towards bolshevism was due to the degree to which it too could be seen as statist and counter-revolutionary.

What reasons can be given to explain the reluctance of German fascist intellectuals to support national-socialism in the same numbers as their Italian counterparts had earlier supported Mussolini? In the early twenties, Hitler's Munich Putsch had been regarded by Freikorps terrorists as a valid, if tactically dubious, nationalist offensive against the hated republic. The national-socialists in turn regarded Fischer and Kern, the assassins of Rathenau, as great national martyrs. Even by the mid-twenties both national-socialists and Juenger's circle of "new nationalists" as it was then called both felt themselves to be part of the same nationalist movement. Both Hitler and Joseph Goebbels had read and acclaimed Juenger's war-writings. Although Juenger and Hitler never met, they exchanged copies of their books and Juenger referred to Hitler as "a great national leader".¹ In 1927 Hitler's party offered Juenger a Reichstag candidacy which he turned down. What started to sow the seeds of discord between the party and the intellectuals? It seemed to lie crucially in two main factors - the attitude of the intellectuals towards political activism and Hitler's leadership role with the Nazi party.

Hitler established his central control and absolute leadership of the Party at the Bamberg conference of 1926 when he not only rejected the ideological programme of the Northern radicals of the party but managed to convince them in spite of this that his own leadership was absolutely indispensable to the future political success of the party.² He established through his extraordinary personal qualities a charismatic domination perhaps unparalleled in twentieth century politics. Joseph Goebbels, at first appalled and depressed at Hitler's support for the ideas of his Bavarian ideologists Gottfried Feder and Alfred Rosenberg, let the last dregs of his socialist

sentiments evaporate before the charisma of his new leader. "Adolf Hitler, I love you", he wrote. "You are both great and simple. A Genius".³ From this moment Goebbels encouraged and flattered by his leader who made him district Gauleiter of Berlin, was no longer distressed by Rosenberg's call for a radical alliance with Anglo-Saxon Britain or by Feder's refusal to denounce capitalism outright. The proletarianised Heidelberg scholar found space beside his total amorality and limitless contempt of humanity for unrestrained reverence of his Feuhrer. For Otto and Gregor Strasser, the more serious of the Northern ideologists, Hitler made it clear that there was room for them to continue their own ideological pursuits if they accepted unequivocally his own leadership and did not abuse this latitude to create party disunity. The result was, as Joseph Nyomarkay has shown,⁴ that ideological conflict in the party did not become a conflict over party programmes but a series of intrigues by party leaders to gain Hitler's support in their struggle against their enemies. Ideological conflict scarcely touched upon the role of the leader which was virtually unassailable. On the one major occasion after 1926 when it did, it resulted in Otto Strasser's expulsion from the party.

Otto Strasser's own ideological position was little different from that of his more powerful and influential brother. Both were in favour of a Prussian socialism- involving large-scale anti-capitalist measures of nationalisation and both, though trenchantly anti-semitic, despised Rosenberg's mystic and virtually incomprehensible Nordic Aryanism. Otto Strasser and his close associate Herbert Blanck however went further and claimed in the Berlin party journal that compared with the idea of national-socialism, the leadership position was of secondary importance. The influence of the revolutionary-nationalists

was beginning to take its toll on Strasser's excessive preoccupation with purely ideological matters. Hitler outraged by this subversive personal attack called Strasser to Munich and tried to buy him off with a prestigious propaganda post in the party. But as Strasser recalls in his memoirs,⁵ this private meeting with Hitler, merely showed the difference between their political positions and the extreme fanaticism of Hitler's racial world-view. It was too great even for a confirmed anti-semite like Strasser to take. What from Hitler's point of view was a question of Strasser's personal disloyalty was from Strasser's point of view a profound ideological difference. He saw Hitler not as a true German socialist but as a rampant racialist. Thus he walked out on Hitler under the heading "The socialists leave the party". But his departure had only minor repercussions. The majority of northern Gauleiters whose socialism was basically no different from his own remained behind with his brother. The crucial difference lay in their acceptance of Hitler's leadership.

Strasser's move, though it did little to affect the party's popularity, was exactly the type of move welcomed by the revolutionary-nationalists. The Tat circle nodded approvingly. Here, they mistakenly thought, was a successful purification of the idea of national-socialism which had been increasingly contaminated by the excessively demagogic emphasis upon Hitler's leadership. Hans Zehrer had called Hitler a "monomaniac without a political programme". Ernst Niekisch claimed that Hitler's personal charismatic style was only possible within the context of a populist and purely democratic politics. "The demagogue", he asserted, "is in the nature of things invariably a westerner".⁶ Although Hitler had initially managed to link his strongly demagogic instincts to German values", the deliberate attempt to turn the streets and assembly halls into battlefields through

frenzied exhortation to violence was a travesty of the Prussian spirit. In addition demagoguery was positively utopian. It developed "a belief in miracles". "National-socialism", Niekisch declared "is a form of national messianism. Its Messiah is Hitler."⁷ The essence of Prussianism was its emphasis on duty and sacrifice. And even Spengler watching from the sidelines, felt moved to condemn the messianic mass euphoria which pervaded the Nazi rise to power.

It was still unclear, however, whether the revolutionary nationalists disapproved of Hitler's leadership in particular or of charismatic dictatorship in general. The question of personal leaders was seldom discussed. The most coherent theoretical statement on the nature of leadership, which in effect leads to an indirect condemnation of charisma, is to be found in Juenger's book The Worker. This was not directly an attack on Hitler himself, like the sensational pamphlet of Ernst Niekisch, Hitler A German Catastrophe published in 1932. It was more an attack on the principle of dictatorship suggested by Carl Schmitt during his earlier political writings.⁸ While Juenger did not attack Hitler directly, as Niekisch did, his rejection of dictatorship obviously contained a fairly direct rejection of the Nazi leader. The future leader of Juenger's fictional worker's state was described as "the first servant, the first soldier, the first worker". Such a description seems if anything to have its origins in the Prussian sense of duty expressed by Frederick the Great in his Anti-Machievel. Here he stated "The ruler is far from being the arbitrary master of his people; he is indeed nothing other than its first servant."⁹ Indeed Juenger regarded dictatorship as nothing more than the temporary feature of the revolutionary transition to a new order. "Dictatorship", he claimed, "is a purely transitional phenomenon. The worker-type (Der Typ) does not acknowledge a dictatorship, since for him freedom and

obedience are identical".¹⁰ Among the national-bolsheviks, the attachment to the Soviet system included a strong admiration for Lenin. Niekisch and Hugo Fischer, in his book Lenin, Machievelli of the East,¹¹ both expressed open admiration for the Bolshevik leader. But Juenger tended to look upon the Soviet five years plans as downgrading the importance of leadership, and none of the national-bolsheviks seemed able to realise the central role of Stalin's dictatorship in the development of industrialisation and the five year plans.

Juenger's Prussian orientation clearly was crucial in his distaste for charisma. Max Weber had shown in his study of charismatic domination that the "waning of charisma" was often due historically to the growth of the barracks system of professional warriors.¹² It seems to have been a similar "warrior communism" which Juenger had in mind when he spoke of the "democracy of work" being enacted by "orders" after the style of the Teutonic orders of knights. In the ascetic life-style of the barracks there was no room for the luxury of charisma. "The more cynical, Spartan, Bolshevik and Prussian life in all its aspects, becomes", he wrote, "the better it will be."¹³ Juenger's desire to model his worker-elites on the orders of the Teutonic knights, the Jesuits and the Spartans, was one which struck a chord among the Nazi leadership. The Jesuits were a model for Himmler's idea on the formation of the S.S. Robert Ley, the leader of the German labour Front mounted in 1937, the unsuccessful experiment of the Ordensburgen, a group of elite worker-corps moulded on very Juengerian lines.¹⁴ At one point in time the party as a whole was brink of being transformed into a series of hierachical orders. For, according to Hermann Rauschning, Hitler and Rosenberg seriously entertained the idea in debating what form the party should take once its parliamentary mission was complete.¹⁵ This romanticised medieval component of Juenger's thought with its Darwinian overtones points to a crucial similarity

between his thinking and that of the party leadership. Nonetheless the supremacy of Hitler's position meant that whatever "orders" existed in the Nazi regime were usually private armies whose bosses were accountable to Hitler and Hitler alone. The Nazi leader's delegation of authority was deliberately structureless. Hitler's party overlords had no clearly defined area of authority and competence and certainly no clearly defined authority-relations to each other. By comparison with Nazism, Juenger's idea of a state based on the command structure of an army seemed quaint and inflexible. As Hitler's lackeys jostled for position among themselves in a state at times approaching confusion, the party leadership seemed more and more like the leadership of a criminal gang. It was a situation crucial to the operation of totalitarian leadership but one by which Juenger, with his Prussian orthodoxy was clearly nauseated. Travail pour le roi de Prusse may no longer have needed a monarchy, but neither did it need an Austrian corporal.

Apart from revolutionary-nationalist objections to Hitler in person, many of the ideological points of difference were vague and diffuse. Hostility towards the party's policy of legality was widespread. The Tat circle's accusation of "liberal parliamentarianism" was the most recurrent. Niekisch also criticised their parliamentary methods by stating "there is no legal revolution nor revolutionary legality; where legality begins, revolution ends." ¹⁶ Juenger, expressing a general disillusionment with the equivocal role of the Nazi party in Schleswig-Holstein lamented that the "most feared expression of the national will" should compromise itself by outrightly condemning violence, and called for the use of "weapons of the purest metal" in the fight against the Weimar system. ¹⁷ Thus the major

criticisms tended to be of political methods. On the question of the general programme of the party, controversy tended to be less systematic. Apart from Otto Strasser, who was forced to continually attack the party from beyond the pale, there was very little genuine ideological debate. One of the sore points for the national-revolutionaries was Gottfried Feder's refusal to extend his attacks on capitalism beyond that of the "interest slavery" of finance capitalism. But anti-semitism was never really a bone of contention. It had been common in the Freikorps and still existed in some degree among many of the national-revolutionaries. There were exceptions. Juenger rejected all biological criteria as being unacceptable to his own technological version of the ruling race, and Hielscher in typically idealist fashion regarded anti-semitism as a form of materialism, an attempt to analyse people on the basis of ethnic criteria which was a reactionary throwback to the Wilhelmian era.¹⁸ But generally speaking anti-semitism and its excesses in the party generally encountered little or no active opposition. It was regarded by Juenger and the others as irrelevant rather than repulsive and the Tat circle scarcely mentioned it.

Other ideological criticism tended to border on the esoteric. Niekisch's paranoia about Catholicism led him to mistakenly identify national-socialism with the "clerical-particularist forces of Bavaria", which were inundated with "Romish separatist and francophile tendencies".¹⁹ Despite Hitler's opposition to Bavarian separatism, his stated wish to create a Third Reich centred in Berlin, and higher electoral support within the Prussian areas of Germany than in the west and south, Niekisch persisted in seeing him trying to introduce the strains of an alien romish virus into German life. Labelling the S.A. despite his admiration for the life-style of its members, as an "imitation" of Mussolini's fascist and romish battalions, he was able

to indulge in a clumsy geopolitical casuistry and claim that his own Prussianism was the opposite of (Italian) fascism. He came to see fascism instead, to use the words of Juenger, as "a brutal stenography of the liberal political system". It possessed all the anti-Prussian and anti-bolshevik vices of the West. In this way religion and geopolitics finally enabled him to the position where he saw national-socialism as being simultaneously "fascistic, bourgeois, civilisational, democratic, parliamentarian and legal" ²⁰ One result was that he failed to account for its phenomenally high electoral success in rural areas of Prussia and North Germany and its much lesser impact on Germany's "decadent" westernized cities and its industrial Rhineland. Another was that he could muster no real opposition to its anti-humanism, its brutality or its desire for total power. Niekisch's attitude can be summed up finally in his hatred of populism. The demagogic leader was the crucial link between the people and political power. Not only did populism entail mob rule, it meant that political leaders were popular leaders in the western democratic sense. In expressing his dislike of Nazi populism however he predictably reduces it to a religious polarity which re-asserts the binding link between Prussian and Protestantism. "The basic premise of national-socialism" he writes, "is, in accordance with Catholic doctrine, the people as a natural reality. For German protestants however, it is the state as a moral achievement." ²¹

Individual Encounters with Nazism

The relations of the leading revolutionary-nationalists with the Nazi party were much closer than they, in retrospect, would have liked. No clear overall pattern emerges. Some like Carl Schmitt, Werner Best, Giselher Wirsing and Ferdinand Fried joined the party. Others like Juenger, Zehrer and Ernst von Salomon were clearly tempted at one time or another to join. Most revolutionary-nationalists had their contacts

or followers in the party. But the dilemma of choosing between political effectiveness and intellectual autonomy again and again repeated itself. The result was that most did not join. In any case, Hitler almost always provided the crucial stumbling block. The reason why Otto Strasser left the party in 1930 was the reason why most revolutionary-nationalists never joined it. But a series of encounters nonetheless took place and it is to these which we must now turn.

One of the major converts was Carl Schmitt, who as a successful academician was peripheral, both in terms of participation and loyalty to the revolutionary-nationalists. Schmitt's conversion to Nazism in 1933 was simultaneously a conversion to the leadership principle of the party, the bugbear of nearly all the revolutionary-nationalists. Because of his academic fame his joining of the party came to be something of cause célèbre. What was perhaps more remarkable was the way in which he was prepared to accommodate his own doctrine of political existentialism to the national-socialist demand for complete acceptance of the Fuehrerprinzip. The political divergence of Schmitt and Juenger during these years is all the more remarkable for their close personal friendship in Berlin during the early thirties when Schmitt had become a Professor of politics at Berlin university. Niekisch recalls that they discussed the political situation quite closely well into 1934 when Schmitt and Arnolt Bronnen, another of Juenger's circle were both confirmed Nazis. With Schmitt's notorious justification of the "Night of the Long Knives" in 1934, in spite of Juenger's personal entreaties, their relations seemed to have cooled considerably. For Schmitt this was a remarkable volte-face. It was accomplished nonetheless with a casuistic ease. The first step that Schmitt took towards a position favourable to the Nazis was in his dismantling of the notion

of a total state. He did this initially in an article in 1932 when he claimed that the Weimar Republic had been transformed into a "quantitative total state" by the fact that the five major political parties operated no longer as liberal parties of opinion but as "total parties" who recruited and indoctrinated their members from the cradle upwards.²² The "qualitative total state" on the other hand was equally politicised but presupposed a unanimity in public life guaranteed by one political movement alone. The next year with the Nazi seizure of power, Schmitt became more explicit. Any authentic state could only be guaranteed by a political movement which has the total confidence of the people. State, movement and people represented a three-sided unity in the creation of a new Reich.²³ The movement was the crucial link between people and state. While the state was static and formal in nature, the movement was dynamic. It linked the political means of administration to the unpolitical Volk. The idea of a total state had now disappeared from sight. Schmitt also went on to argue that national-socialism was a concrete political phenomenon which invalidated the abstract and purely formal concept of a counter-revolutionary decision. The idea of martial law, previously conceived as an exceptional measure necessary for a brief period to enforce that decision, becomes accepted by Schmitt as a potentially permanent aspect of political order. In addition Schmitt came to discard the notions of norm and decision as empty legalistic abstractions. Decisionism was doctrine without substance. But what in that case did possess substance? The answer was the concrete political order of national-socialism. The Nazi seizure of power was an existential political fact, not an attempt to fulfill the premises of an abstract theory. The exceptional

counter-revolutionary decision is thus replaced by a permanent principle of leadership "which springs directly from the concrete and substantial thought of the national-socialist movement." ²⁴ All the supra-legal features of counter-revolutionary dictatorship formerly justified by Schmitt as a necessary exception to the rule now become the basis of the rule itself. The movement as the "authentic" representative of the people's will is free on a permanent basis to dispense with the law as it wishes.

The essence of the permanent basis of this totalitarian power is not vested in the movement as a whole but in its leader. In Schmitt's justification of the purge of the S.A., it is the will of the leader alone which emerges as the source and fount of all legality and legitimacy. Schmitt supports Hitler's decision to liquidate his own lawless henchmen in the crudest of terms. But this same crudity was to point out quite clearly the guiding principle of legitimation for the totalitarianism of the Third Reich:

The truth is that the act of the Fuehrer was real jurisdiction. It is not subordinate to justice but is itself real justice. It is not the action of the republican dictator who creates a *fait accompli* in the realm of lawlessness when the law has momentarily closed its eyes, in order that the fiction of an unbroken legality can re-establish itself on the basis of newly-created facts. The judgement of the leader springs from the same source of right as the rights of any people.... All right originates in the right-to-life (*Lebensrecht*) of the people. ²⁵

What is the link between leader and people? It is not any liberal-democratic notion of representativeness. There is no notion of a political mandate. Unity of leader and led is based not on political equality (*Gleichheit*) but on "identity of species" (*Artgleichheit*). Here lies the supreme tautological casuistry

of political existentialism. The leader commands the led because he is like the led, and the affinity of leader and followers is based on the existential (and by implication historically indisputable) fact that he leads them. According to Schmitt "Only species identity can prevent the leader's power from being tyrannical and arbitrary." ²⁶ It is clear however that with the conceptually empty notion of identity of species it is already both. There is no redress from the existential fact of leadership of the sort which results in the Night of the Long Knives. In any case "the concrete political thought of national-socialism" had already bypassed Schmitt and devised substantive criteria for his identity of species as well as his earlier friend/foe dichotomy. Species-identity entailed biological identity. The division between friend and foe was narrowed down to the distinction between Aryan and Jew. Schmitt, abandoning the existential freedom of deciding on foes, swam with the tide and acquiesced in the concrete racial notions of fighting and leadership. But the impetus had come from the outside. Schmitt was left with the empty shell of an existentialist formalism and the sand of history slipped through his fingers.

His point about leadership remained clear however. Any exercise of the leader's will was intrinsically justifiable whatever the consequences. Moreover it was concrete and permanent. The irony of Schmitt's own position in the Third Reich was that despite his overt and casusistic alignment with the new order other academic apologists such as Otto Kollreuter and Hans J. Wolff who took up the concept of the "will of the leader" not only left Schmitt in the lurch but tended to stigmatise him for having produced the henceforth subversive notion

of the total state in which no reference to the Fuehrer existed. Despite his pliability Schmitt's fall from grace came about from his erstwhile originality. He had not a fraction of the influence in the Reich he supported that he had in the Republic which he hated. Even the erratic freewheeling ideologues of the S.S. attacked him as potentially dangerous.²⁷ Yet another irony also presented itself. The most articulate justification of the Fuehrerprinzip in the Third Reich came from the S.S. man whose notion of heroic realism itself owed in earlier days something to Schmitt's doctrine of fighting - Werner Best. Using his talent from the safe perch high in the upper ranges of the police state, Best presented the most extreme expression of support for the leader's will. In doing so he shed the traces of his earlier ideological leanings. Instead of fighting, it was the will of the leader which was the destiny of the German people. Best claimed prophetically that the Nazi leadership's will was not subject to law but only to historical destiny.²⁸ History alone could punish its wrongful use and lead Germany on the road to catastrophe. And history did. Best recoiled before his own doctrine as he saw Germany moving along the road to Stalingrad.

The Boxheim Document

Werner Best was in fact another notable exception to revolutionary-nationalist scepticism. His disillusionment with the intellectual hauteur of Juenger circle and his obsession with the Nietzschean will-to-power led him to look for more satisfying means of expression than mere discussion. In 1929 he left the Vormarsch circle after a disagreement with Hielscher and Juenger and later joined the Nazi party. From then on he became increasingly contemptuous of Juenger's salon politics. At the same time his freewheeling approach to politics

and the intellectual influence of Juenger remained in evidence for some time. While Juenger was obsessed by the nature of power, Best like his new Fuehrer, was obsessed by the seizure of power. In 1931 with the help of some party associates he produced the amazing Boxheim document which became the first publicly known Nazi plan for an illegal seizure of power.²⁹ Best had become a legal adviser to the party in the Gauleitung of Hesse and a Nazi deputy in the provincial parliament. The documents were intended as secret contingency plans in the event of a communist uprising. After the defection to the S.P.D. of Wilhelm Schafer Gauleiter of Offenbach, where the rendezvous of the conspirators, Boxheim manor, was located, the documents were seized by local government officials and made public. Best claimed that the plans were to be used only in the event of a communist uprising and while he was suspended from legal duties in Hesse no legal prosecution was made against him. The exposure of the documents caused embarrassment to the party leadership who knew of their existence but not of their content. Hitler was prompted by the incident to suspend the production of such contingency plans at a local level in the party and to deny to the press that they had any effect on the party's general policy of legality. Best, however retained his membership and position in the party.

Although the incident testified to a degree of local initiative in party activism, in Best's particular case, this indicated his newfound conviction that the Nazi party was the most suitable vehicle for totalitarian revolution. The documents reveal quite clearly a personal independent and cynical plan for the creation of totalitarian power. Best was acting out the type of vision theoretically formulated by Schmitt and Juenger, in the political arena itself. The document bears the mark not only of a counter-revolutionary decisionism but also of Juenger's seminal interest

in total mobilization. In its fastidious legalistic jargon and its quasi-military pronouncements, it in effect amounted to a mandate for Nazi lawlessness. What it lacked quite significantly was any mention of the role of the leader. Best had not yet swung round to the acceptance of Hitler's will as the prime moving force of national-socialism. The role of terror and political repression is to be monopolized here by the S.A. and other party militia. Immediately "after the suppression of the previous state administration and the destruction of the commune" - a reference to a communist uprising - they are ordered to enact a series of emergency decrees and policies to provide for "the relief of the people.... in the name of the German nation". This ostensible "rescue operation" was in fact nothing less than a springboard for the Nazi expropriation of total power. Those who resisted the measures undertaken by the S.A. for "the restoration of public security and the organisation of public consumption" would be executed. The institution of a death penalty euphemistically regarded as a necessity for the protection of the people was in fact a carte blanche for S.A. intimidation and terror.

Best had thus followed along classic counter-revolutionary lines. The example of the Freikorps was obviously at hand. He went further than this however. The measures he envisaged were not merely emergency measures but rather the precedent for a new type of permanent exercise of power which utilised the same freedom of domination and terror normally available in emergency situations. For Best then goes on to outline measures for the freezing of production, exchange and the circulation of money. The description of such economical measures is never without its irony. They are presented as "guidelines for an emergency decree to ensure the security of the present property-owning

classes!" (sic). In such a situation "all food provisions stand at the disposal of the S.A." All manufacturers and traders have to submit an immediate account of all their goods, whether in warehouses or their own possession. All selling of food provisions is forbidden. The penalty for hindering or disobeying was in all cases to be "confiscation of the entire wealth" of the person concerned, plus any additional punishment deemed necessary, including the death penalty. Furthermore "The S.A. leadership, in coming to the rescue of the population is compelled to dispose of all available supplies of basic necessities, that is to say, in practical terms, over the whole productive output and wealth of each individual German comrade and of the population as a whole. There is no more private income until further notice." In addition to this, Best mentions other measures whose effect to complete this macabre scheme for the destruction of the market economy in the name of the property-owning classes. The flow of money is to be stopped by the forbidding of all monetary payments, including payment of rent and repayment of loans or of the interest on them.

The projected decision to curtail the whole economic basis of the property-owning class in order to "protect" it, is all the more remarkable for the fact that nowhere in the document is there any specific mention of the communist threat which the justification for the whole operation in the first place. Unlike Freikorps or even official Nazi propaganda, there is no reference to the Red terror nor to ways and means of rooting out communist conspirators in hiding. The repressive measures outlined by Best seem directed more at the

population they are meant to protect. The legalistic decree for the protection of property reads like a prolegomena to the abolition of capitalism. Shorn of revolutionary rhetoric, it seeks to ensure that the destruction of an imagined or even fictitious proletariat is a signal for the S.A. takeover of the means of production in Germany. A totalitarian regime, in the interests of the middle class would then accomplish what its working-class enemies had failed to do. The failure of Marxian class-consciousness signalled the ascendancy of the Nietzschean will-to-power. What Best had earlier called "the class-struggle from above" found its practical expression. It is tied moreover to the Prussian ethic of work. The propertied classes effectively deprived of their livelihood, the population at the mercy of the S.A., all victims of terror except for Jews are given the opportunity of redeeming themselves through work-service. All Germans of both sexes over the age of sixteen were eligible. The economic rewards they received were to be wholly dependent on the satisfactory fulfillment of this duty, or as Juenger might have said, their factual achievement.

Best's remarkable document is testament both to the relation between theory and practice and to its limitations. It is permeated by theoretical assumptions which come directly from the influence of Juenger's circle. At the same time it is a concrete plan for a seizure of power within the Nazi movement. But the Nietzschean thirst for power had its own pitfalls. Best could only enter the party at one of its more remote provincial levels and personal plans for the seizure of power

by provincial officials were seen as a threat to the party's drive to centralisation. Successful promotion meant compromise. Hitler's protective umbrella for Aryan big business meant that the Boxheim documents could not be repeated. Best thus looked for compensation in the more regimented forms of terror in the S.S. Here his intellectual and legal background made him an articulate spokesman and an important adviser. Compared with the doctrineless activists and opportunists like Heydrich, his superior, and Walter Schellenberg, his contemporary who outshined him, intellectual expertise proved a hindrance rather than a guide in the real totalitarian struggle for power. For the ruthless vision of power must have an even more ruthless pragmatism. Compared with expertise of Heydrich, Best's progress was only a quasi-triumph. In terms of the political failure of the revolutionary-nationalists however, it represented a strange sort of success. It was the major exception to the impasse of theory and practice which had paralysed the fascist intelligentsia.

Goebbels and Juenger

In their life-style and political outlook, Joseph Goebbels and Ernst Juenger were poles apart. Goebbel's crucial contribution to the spectacular rise of Nazism lay in that area which Juenger most despised - the area of mass propaganda. During the war and immediately afterwards there was bitter resentment in Germany about what was considered to be the effective propaganda machine of the Allied Powers through which they justified their claim that they were fighting a war on behalf of humanity against barbarism. We have already documented the response of the revolutionary-nationalists. That of Goebbels was

radically different. Like Hitler he saw the enormous potentialities of the mass propaganda which had been so effectively used in the Great War, and he determined to copy it and turn to his own advantage. The electoral politics he despised offered tremendous opportunities of building up a mass party through persistent mass propaganda, mass meetings and mass demonstrations. Juenger had seen the permanence of means in the sphere of technology. Goebbels saw it in the sphere of propaganda. For here he regarded truth as immaterial. If Juenger's technology entailed the abolition of values, Goebbel's propaganda entailed the abolition of truth. More than this it meant that theory was irrelevant to political practice. He once remarked "there is no theoretical way of determining which kind of propaganda is more effective and which kind is less effective". It was the propagandists and not the philosophers who made history. While Juenger relied on the written word, Goebbels used the spoken word to better advantage perhaps than any other political orator of the twentieth century. Furthermore he rationalised his own achievement by looking upon the great men of history in his own image - as propagandists.

"And what else was Jesus Christ? Did he not make propaganda? Did he write or did he preach? And what about Moheemad? Did he write sophisticated essays or did he go out and tell the people what he wanted?.... Look at our own century. Was Mussolini a scribbler or was he a great speaker? When Lenin went to St. Petersburg, did he rush from the station into his study to write a book or did he speak to the multitude?" 30

Needless to say in the year of decision 1932 when Juenger was in the process of completing Der Arbeiter, Goebbels was racing indefatigably from one end of Germany to the other making speeches. Having stated that propaganda was all, Goebbels confined his intellect to the rostrum and the assembly-hall. While Juenger wanted

to entomb language in the coffin of technology, Goebbels tried to reduce it to the self-sustaining shriek. His diaries are almost literally a row of exclamation marks. Theories of brutality may have been influential but the shout and the exhortation was the mark of domination over the masses. Goebbels was a purely amoral technician of the art of attaining political power. After 1933 Heydrich was the equally effective amoral technician who went about preserving it. In fact both Heydrich and Goebbels came closest to Juenger's plea for a total absence of values in political leadership. Both did so however in ways that were alien to him. And both were ultimately subordinates to the Hitlerian vision of racial conquest and extermination, which as technicians they were empowered to facilitate. Both possessed the doctrineless dynamism necessary for Hitler's sense of racial mission. Neither possessed the driving force of that perverted idealism which had revealed itself in the pages of Mein Kampf. It was a hallucinatory world-mission and not amoral instrumentalism which was finally responsible for the destruction of Germany.

Although in practice Goebbels and Juenger lived in different worlds, in 1932, those worlds happened to collide. Both had an inveterate admirer in Arnolt Bronnen, a connoisseur of intellectual hardness who had turned away from his earlier friendship with Bertolt Brecht to the fascists of the day.³¹ Goebbels, never forgetting his own days of scholarship at Heidelberg and his frustrated ambitions to be a novelist, still harboured intellectual aspirations. Armed with Hitler's permission, he sought out some of the Berlin revolutionary-nationalists, including Juenger and Niekisch in an attempt to persuade

them to join the party. ³² Niekisch was immediately hostile to him and they almost came to blows. Juenger on the other hand had several meetings with Goebbels, and the thought of joining the party, despite his reservations about it, must have crossed his mind. Yet fully imprinted on his mind was a belief in the gulf between theory and practice in German nationalism, which as a rule he wished to leave standing. As early as 1927 he had written:

"There remains the distinction that national-socialism is, in its role as a political organisation, directed towards winning the material means of power. The task of nationalism on the other hand is something different. On the one side exists the wish to put the idea into practice, on the other to understand it in its deepest and purest possible sense. For that reason the masses quite rightly play a role in national-socialism, while for nationalism, number has no significance." ³³

As a Nazi seizure of power seemed more and more imminent, this gulf seemed to widen, even among former comrades. In 1932 Salomon recalls meeting his former Freikorps associate Ernst Roehm by chance on Munich railway station surrounded by his impressive S.A. entourage. On the train Roehm offered Salomon an administrative post in the party, claiming it needed intellectuals. When Salomon asked what he was to do, the reply came back "Administrate and keep your mouth shut". ³⁴ Hielscher recalls a similar encounter soon after 1933 in a Berlin restaurant with his old comrade Werner Best. Best in S.S. uniform told him that the door was open to him, but promised no opportunities for intellectual controversy or salon discussion. Hielscher refused. ³⁵ The same gulf existed between Juenger and Goebbels. Invited to a select meeting of intellectuals and dignitaries addressed by Goebbels in Berlin, Juenger was finally alienated by the Nazi leader's intellectual pretensions. He walked out halfway through his speech in protest and Goebbels was

furious. The latter wrote afterwards in his diary, exasperatedly but also perceptively:

"(These intellectuals) seem utterly unable to grasp that we really embody something essentially new, that we will not and cannot be compared with any other party, that we are aiming at a totalitarian state, and must attain to absolute power in order to achieve our aims" 36

This was something Juenger was unable to concede. How could an upstart like Goebbels put into effect the theories of a superior man? And even though they were a blueprint for a totalitarian state which had no need of theories anyway? The tenuous links which Juenger possessed with Nazism were finally broken.

The Strange case of Martin Heidegger

This did not mean of course that Juenger's work ceased to influence others towards Nazism. It still seemed possible for outsiders to mistakenly identify revolutionary-nationalists doctrine with the ideology of national-socialism. In North Germany after all, the ideas of the revolutionary-nationalists were very influential in the party. In this context perhaps the most remarkable convert to national-socialism during the seizure of power was the Freiburg existentialist philosopher Martin Heidegger. As Jean-Michel Palmier has shown very convincingly, Heidegger's attachment to national-socialism came not from any direct interest in politics, for which prior to 1933 he had shown little inclination, but because he regarded Juenger's Der Arbeiter as the true philosophy of national-socialism. Largely for this reason he became rector of Freiburg in 1933 joined the Nazi party, and played a temporary role in the academic Gleichschaltung presided over in university circles by Ernst Krieck at Frankfurt and Alfred Baumler at Berlin. Heidegger's inaugural rectoral address

Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universitaeten³⁸ and various articles for the student newspaper during the course of the next ten months in fact testify quite clearly the impact of Juenger's work. Later in 1939 after his disillusionment with Nazism, he unsuccessfully attempted to promote a seminar course on Der Arbeiter which was soon terminated by the university authorities.³⁹

The ideological basis of the Gleichschaltung of the university did in fact give Heidegger some ground for considering national-socialism in this light. Ernst Krieck and Alfred Baumler, the newly appointed Professor of Philosophy at Berlin and a friend of Juenger in the late twenties both attempted to introduce into the universities the fighting ethos of the front-experience. Denunciations of the classic ideals of humanist learning introduced into German universities at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Wilhelm von Humboldt were accompanied by strident demands for a student body with a new "soldierly spirit". For Baumler "the theoretical man" of the campus was to be replaced by "the political soldier".⁴⁰ For Krieck the university was to be the incubator for a new "intellectual soldiery" whose symbol was to be Horst Wessel.⁴¹ Studentdom was an intellectual political construction. In a similar vein Baumler saw the student's task as a continuation of the political revolution of 1933 by intellectual means parallel with a "social revolution" of worker's and peasants. The political soldier, Baumler stated, would approach learning in a Nietzschean fashion as a heroic task. Opposed to positivism on the one hand and irrationalism on the other would be a "heroic rationalism" where the attraction of danger offset the security of positivism and the armchair learning of nineteenth century humanism.⁴² The compulsory qualification for teachers and students

alike seemed to be the soldierly life-style rampant in all the other party organisations, not only the S.A. and the S.S. but also the Labour Front and the Hitler Youth.

All this fits quite credibly with the cult of the front-experience. Heidegger's own version of it, more subtle, and finally regarded as subversive by the party experts, was to appropriate Juenger's idea of fighting as a form of work. It is Juenger's theme of work as universal praxis which informs Heidegger's own statements on the German universities. Although he starts off in his rectoral address at Freiburg by claiming that in the academic community of both teacher and student bodies "must place itself at the disposal of fighting," he then goes on to conceptualise all activity under national-socialism as "service". There are three types of service - work-service by which students participate in the people's community; military-service by which they contribute to the defence of the nation's honour and destiny; and knowledge-service which is concerned with "the spiritual mission of the German people".⁴³ The idea of learning as service is, according to Heidegger, totally incompatible with the idea of "academic freedom" in the liberal sense which he rejects as "unreal and negative". But what was to be the model for service to the state? The academic community was to model itself on the discipline of physical work. Heidegger claimed that "the fighting community of teacher and student should remodel itself on the work-place". He exhorted his students in his article for the Freiburg Student Newspaper to join the then voluntary work-camps being set up by the Nazis for German youth. "In the work-camp a new reality presents itself", he wrote. "It stands as the symbol for the opening-out of our higher

learning to the new educational power of work-service.⁴⁴ The university community could not only destroy once and for all its traditional academic insularity but organise "their whole existence in a simpler, harsher and more ascetic manner than any of their comrades" to prove their own worth as workers.

Clearly unlike Krieck and Baumler, Heidegger did not merely envisage a student emulation of the soldierly life-style, but an active attempt by students to imitate rival and surpass the disciplined methods of work in other spheres of life. The division of labour between the head and the hand itself was to break through the intellectual emulation of the life-style of work. Intellectuals were to become workers - not merely intellectual workers, but workers as such. In one of his last articles on work-service in January 1934, shortly before his resignation as rector, Heidegger states quite openly his reversal of the meanings of work and intellect. All genuine intellectual endeavour is but one aspect of work. Heidegger sees the new national-socialist Germany as dominated by Juenger's totalitarian metaphysic.

"Within the German university a new basis for scientific work will slowly emerge. This will result in the disappearance of the concept of intellect and intellectual work within which the "refined academic" (Gebildete) has operated up to now and which his emissaries still wish to rescue for an autonomous concept of the "intellectually creative" So-called intellectual work is not intellectual because it is related to higher spiritual pursuits but because as work it reaches back into the necessity of the historical existence of its people and is directly - because scientifically - assailed by the harshness of the dangers of human existence.

"There is only one single "living-class" (Lebenstand) in Germany. That is the work-class (Arbeitstand) which is rooted in the fertile soil of the German people and freely united with the historical will of the state. Its character has previously been moulded in the movement of the National-Socialist German worker's party." 45

What attracted Heidegger to Juenger's approach was his attempt to subordinate all activity to the concept of work and all science

and knowledge to the concept of technology. The latter in particular seemed to complement his firm conviction that modern science was subordinate in importance to philosophy.⁴⁶ For he traced his own existentialism directly back to the Greek pre-socratic notion of "being". The history of Western metaphysics he regarded as a process of degeneration consequent upon the eclipse of pre-socratic philosophy. Juenger's confrontation with technology provided him with a means for restoring the concern with "being" in modern thought. Even when his brief flirtation with Nazism was over, the obsession with technology remained. In 1935 he was still claiming that the "inner truth and greatness" of the Nazi movement was its acceptance of "the encounter between global technology and modern man."⁴⁷ The same theme continued to haunt the rhetoric of his post-war writings.

The attraction to technology was made at no small cost. Heidegger blithely overlooked the political cynicism of Juenger's arguments, his worship of Stalinist terror, and from a philosophical point of view, the overtly Darwinian components of the conception of work. All conspired to undermine any analogy between the destructive nature of modern technology and the Greek conception of tragic being. It also perverted the understanding of Greek tragedy in modern philosophy. Sixty years previously, Nietzsche had illuminated the birth of tragedy. With Juenger and Heidegger's turn to technology, this illumination was at an end. Existentialism emerged out of all this, less as a doctrine of tragic being, than as a justification for murder and slavery. Heidegger has rightly been exonerated from the taint of Nazism and especially of anti-semitism. Spied on by the Gestapo who reported to the anxious Baumber and attacked by Krieck for his philosophical connections with "decadent" Jewish philosophers like Georg Simmel and Edmund Husserl, he

was finally forced out of the party a disillusioned man. But while his departure was partially honourable, his entry was less so. He was led to Nazism by the philosophically complex but nonetheless nihilistic creed of the abolition of values in the modern world. It was a ludicrous commitment born out of political ignorance. For he knew nothing of the political differences between Juenger and the Nazis, and had never in fact met Juenger. But under the circumstances of his own insularity and the attraction of nihilism in German philosophy it was totally feasible. Heidegger's plea for the abolition of "refined intellect" was ironically enough a plea for the abolition of the very circumstances by which he mistakenly joined the Nazi movement in the first place. It was a plea made under the very conditions which he was trying to terminate. Without them it would have scarcely been possible. The result was that he was to cast a long and enduring shadow over his intellectual reputation for a movement which had little intrinsic interest for him. But to his chagrin, and because of his naivety, he found that out too late. And there is always a lingering suspicion that to more amenable forms of totalitarianism, his particular brand of existentialism would always have been susceptible.

Work and the Dissolution of the Bourgeois World

One thing which Heidegger had taken seriously was the Nazi claim to be a "German workers' party". The reality was more contradictory and ambiguous. Its early composition was predominantly lower-middle class. Although later an attempt was made to recruit urban workers, especially in the North, after 1928 the majority of its recruits came from small-town or rural backgrounds when it switched

to a predominantly nationalist and patriotic platform. The urban worker was in fact the most resistant stratum of the population to Nazism, despite Goebbels tendency to see a stout proletarian beneath every brown shirt. One of the obvious reasons for this was the strong political organisation of the communists and the social-democratic partisanship of the major trade unions. Another was the Nazi party ban on the formation of Nazi unions and Hitler's policy of courting large industrialists for funds which led among other things to his confrontation with Otto Strasser after the latter's defiance of a party ban on strikes in Saxony. Deprived of the right to organise unions and with only a small number of exceptions, the right to support strikes, the Northern radicals encountered great difficulties in their efforts to make the movement live up to its name as a German worker's party. Efforts nonetheless were made. Gregor Strasser, with the help of Berlin associates such as Reinhold Muchow started up a factory cell organisation the Nationalsozialistische Betriebsorganisation. Alfred Krebs, the Gauleiter of Hamburg who was active in the organisation recalls that though some young communists were converted the majority of recruits were young white-collar workers from the Free (politically unaligned) Trade Unions fearing unemployment during the uncertainty of the depression.⁴⁸ The N.S.B.O. thus became a channel for the political radicalisation of white collar-workers fearing proletarianisation. It was one of the most concrete and militant expressions within the party of what Zehrer had called "the revolution of the centre".

The revolution of the centre was accompanied however in this context not only by an emphasis on the need to avoid proletarianisation but by an ideological emphasis upon a revitalised conception of the German

worker. One of the Tat circle's great white hopes in the resistance to proletarianisation had been the nationalist white-collar Deutsche Handlungsverband. It was this same union which Kerbs canvassed unsuccessfully in Hamburg to give the Party full official support. The large number of its members who did join the party on an individual basis did show however that outside the unions the N.S.B.O. managed to gain some limited success.⁴⁹ But in the depression situation, the fear of unemployment which undoubtedly helped its cause was offset by the widespread dimensions of unemployment itself. Here it was the S.A. rather than the N.S.B.O. which was the beneficiary of Germany's economic troubles. In terms of the general expansion of party organisations and in comparison say with the Nazi success in enlisting the farmer's Landbund to its cause, the N.S.B.O. fared badly. Its strong ideological orientation came very much from the commitment of its leaders to the most difficult and unrewarding tasks of the Nazis.

The Nazi myth of the German worker as a stereotypical opposite of the "degenerate proletarian" was one of its main ideological props. In opposition to the notion of a proletariat or "a working-class" (Arbeiderschaft) Strasser came to use a term first suggested by the national-bolshevik August Winnig, a "workerdom" (Arbeitertum)⁵⁰ and Winnig himself moved closer to national-socialism in the early thirties claiming that national-socialism was the only movement with a feasible chance in the historical circumstances of creating a genuine German worker's movement.⁵¹ What in fact was the sociological and political basis of this projected workerdom? It constituted by and large a pre-emptive middle-class strike against the idea and the possibility

of proletarianisation. Work was to be both a life-style and a reality for all Germans. By 1932 when the N.S.B.O. possessed a membership of over two hundred thousand and over eight thousand factory cells,⁵² Strasser felt confident enough to speak of a embryonic German worker's movement which included manual workers, clerical workers and employers. He told a rally of the N.S.B.O. in the Berlin Sportspalast "I am convinced that the ultimate victory of the N.S.B.O. hinges on the realisation that the problem of the German worker is a spiritual and metaphysical problem".⁵³ The materialist conception of the worker inaugurated by the French revolution was dying with the disintegration of the liberal world-view. Marxism and pacifism were merely offshoots of a disintegrating liberalism and the workers' movement was estranged from the state in Germany by "Bourgeois-Jewish leaders". For Strasser the true concept of work meant an alliance of the third and fourth estates to the exclusion of big business and international finance-capitalism. Thus he spoke of a new unity between work-employee (Arbeitnehmer) and entrepreneur (Unternehmer) on the basis of what he described in a famous Reichstag speech as the "anti-capitalist yearning" of ninety-five per cent of the German people, who were fighting against "the demons Gold, world-economy and materialism".⁵⁴

Strasser's conception of work owes much to Spengler. He saw work as a Prussian life-style based on the example of officialdom, and he spoke of it as embodying the "achievement principle of the Prussian officier and the German civil servant".⁵⁵ Thus ownership, bureaucracy and labour involved the same ethical conception of work, the same disciplined obedience and effort to be found in a soldierly life-style. By this means all class distinctions were to be finally overcome. The attempt by Strasser and the N.S.B.O. to organise a movement of 'classless'

workers provided an important contemporary context for Juenger's own preoccupation with work. Yet Juenger despised the idea used by both Spengler and Strasser, that work could be based upon some species of officialdom. He attacked it as bureaucratic, one of the reasons why he eventually dismissed Carl Schmitt's idea of a total state. The latter could only, he said, lead to "a total bureaucracy".⁵⁶ Moreover his acclaim of Stalinist industrialisation led him to a point diametrically opposed to the Trotskyist critique of Stalinist Russia as a degenerate worker's state which had stultified through bureaucracy. The Darwinian struggle for survival undermined all forms of bureaucracy and made expertise the tool of danger and destruction.

Yet there were points of similarity between Strasser and Juenger. Strasser's contention that the problem of work was metaphysical was the starting point, his idea of the unity of the third and fourth estates a necessary presupposition of Juenger's theory of technology. The similarity also shows in his ambivalent attitude to private property. Whereas someone like Niekisch regarded the abolition of private property as a necessary principle, Juenger claimed that the principle was a matter of indifference. What mattered was the consequences of total mobilisation and not the premises of "an abstract radicalism" which as often as not were incapable of being translated into active policies. He demanded instead a "devaluation of ownership" based on the destruction of the values associated with private ownership. "Private initiative", he claimed, "will become unthinkable the moment it is assigned the status of a special attribute of work."⁵⁷ Moreover he went on to counter the Marxist preoccupation with private ownership by suggesting that all that was really necessary was the destruction of the feeling of private ownership. How was this to be done?

It was to be achieved by an idea, also preached by Strasser, of the distribution of fiefs. Under total mobilisation "every form of ownership will possess the more or less distinctive attributes of a fief".⁵⁸ This romantic feudal notion enables Juenger to conceive of his "orders" of fighter-workers as possessors of a fief, and of technocrats as modern medieval knights. It also enabled him to conceal his peculiar blindness to the problem of leadership. If the worker-technocrat was a vassal, who was his master? For this there is no answer.

The point of divergence between Juenger and Strasser, given initially similarities, lies in Juenger's totalitarian model of technology. For Strasser's idea of work remained subordinate to his belief in an authoritarian corporatist state. While, ironically enough, his position as Organisation leader of the party made him crucially responsible for the party cell organisation which was to play such an important part in the Gleichschaltung of 1933, his theory by contrast was more modest in its claims. "We want an authoritarian state" he proclaimed. "We recognise the higher authority of the state to demand obedience and discipline from us if the state itself guarantees justice."⁵⁹ There was little hint in Strasser's speeches of the degree of Nazi control to come after 1933. He advocated a planned economy involving nationalisation of essential industries, but this was hardly any different from the mixed economies of many modern West European countries. His other main platform was the demand for the creation of "vocational organisations" based upon occupational status, which, in a very Durkheimian manner, would have the dual task of social integration and political socialisation. They were to be relatively autonomous organisations, and it was to be on the basis of this autonomy

that loyalty and discipline could be promoted. This concession to autonomy meant that Strasser's ideas were received very favourably in 1932 and 1933 in the columns of Die Tat.

More susceptible than Juenger and the national-bolsheviks to the threat of totalitarianism, Zehrer and his editorial associates became amenable to the seemingly anti-totalitarian yet sociologically conscious position of Strasser in the period immediately before the seizure of power. Ferdinand Fried could be read calling for "corporatist reconstruction" and "a planned economy" free from bolshevik influence,⁶⁰ while Hans Zehrer made a last defiance stand against the Nazis on the issue of institutional autonomy. In March 1933 he demanded that the new German state should possess "Authority and respect for government; distance between ruler and ruled; and autonomy for communities, districts and professions."⁶¹ In fact he criticised the Nazis as both liberal and totalitarian. On the one hand he resented their parliamentary methods, on the other he criticised "the fascist experiment of a one-party dictatorship."⁶² He allowed Strasser and his associates an ideological platform in Die Tat, even to the extent of publishing an anonymous article by Strasser himself, which was used by Goebbels to help discredit him in Hitler's eyes. But they overrated Strasser's role in the party, predicting after his resignation from all posts of responsibility, that the Nazi party would collapse.⁶³ It overcame the crisis however without great difficulty, a task made easier by virtue of the fact that Strasser proclaimed his continuing loyalty to the party and to Hitler.

Strasser's motives in negotiating with Schleicher have never clearly been brought to light. Recently Dietrich Orlow has suggested that after the setbacks of 1932 when the Nazis had failed to gain an

electoral parliamentary majority, Strasser was convinced that power could only be gained initially through coalition and compromise.⁶⁴ It is quite possible that he was aiming for total power just as much as Hitler or Goebbels. But his preparedness to relinquish this position temporarily, for whatever motives, brought him support from Die Tat which was attempting to break the Nazi monopoly on the kind of social radicalism it favoured itself. Whether this would have resolved the tension between the intellectuals and the party is doubtful. From Strasser's point of view, the recruitment of intellectual support was a way of enhancing the goals of the party, not of ensuring its ideological correctness. While he was obviously less Machievellian with respect to potential intellectual sympathisers than Goebbels, the dilemma of priorities remained. Having resigned his leadership posts, he made no attempt to oppose Hitler at all. This decision was perhaps a more crucial key to his political role and political thinking than any pronouncement on the nature of work or the ideology of corporatism.

Under Robert Ley, the German Labour Front, which effectively took over control of the industrial initiative of the N.S.B.O. after the downfall of Strasser remained committed to its soldierly image. Ley called the German worker "a soldier of work". In other ways there was little continuity. The ideological discussions of a new workerdom ceased. The Labour Front did attempt an abolition of class distinctions by joining employers and workers together in one organisation. It did so however, by forgoing many of the characteristics of Prussian socialism.⁶⁵ The Front attached itself to the mass euphoria of the Nazi movement as a whole and adopted as its slogan the phrase "Strength through Joy". For Juenger the phrase

could only have been "Strength through Pain". In the radical transformation of identity that occurred during the convulsions of the Nazi revolution, the image of bourgeois citizenship gave way not so much to an image of fighting-work as to one of Aryan purity in a new racial community. But work as an instrument of bourgeois self-destruction had done its task. An anonymous writer in Die Tat pondered over Juenger's prophecy of the decline of the bourgeois and the emergence of the new worker-type. But he expressed a sense of elation rather than a sense of regret. After all that destruction was not to be carried out by the working-class but by the bourgeoisie themselves. "We ought to admit with glowing pride", he proclaimed, "that the bourgeoisie whose final role in the history of capitalism is currently being enacted, plays the decisive role in its own destruction". 66

The idea of work was crucial among many German nationalists to the bourgeois destruction of bourgeois existence. It was precisely through the Prussian ideal of work that the young bourgeois generation could play the decisive role in its own destruction. It was the same ideal of work which transcended the mutual repulsion of Nazism and Stalinism. Ernst Fischer the Marxist art critic recalled an altercation with a Stalinist acquaintance about the sculptor Josef Thorak's Nazi "Monument to Labour" on the Reich Autobahn. The stalinist had been busy foaming about bourgeois decadence when Fischer showed him a photograph of it. "But what's decadent about that?", came the reply. "Labour, the horny hand....Was that by a Nazi too? A pity!"⁶⁷

Hermann Rauschning and the Role of Ideas in Politics

Of all the former Nazis who turned against the movement and criticised it in the thirties, the most intellectually penetrating is Hermann Rauschning. Rauschning, an East Prussian farmer and a Nazi party leader in the Danzig Senate, reproduced in his conversations with Hitler of 1932 and 1933 an astonishing document of Hitler's political attitudes and his outlook on life

generally. Despite this however, Rauschning was to drastically over-rate the influence of revolutionary-nationalism in the Nazi revolution. It is revolutionary-nationalism which is the dominant ideological component in his idea of Nazism as a "revolution of nihilism". While Rauschning admitted that the first and crucial phase of Nazism was the mobilisation of the masses for purposes of attaining total power, he saw "the second phase of the revolution" as being an almost direct transformation of Germany into a totalitarian worker's state. Crucial to this is Juenger's idea of a new German worker, which according to Rauschning, was the growing idea among the German younger generation:

"Ernst Juenger's great vision of the Gestalt of the worker is winning growing support, among national-socialist youth as well as among the young who no longer support the national-socialists, in the army and the young intelligentsia, in the professions where the brainwork of technology is performed, even in the S.S., right inside the narrowest circle of party fanaticsHis 'democracy of work' is what national-socialism claims to be, the genuine unity of revolutionary nationalism and socialism."⁶⁸

For this reason he went on to devalue the racial basis of national-socialism, which he saw as mainly Austrian in origin, and elevate the Prussian conception of work. Thus he speaks of the younger generation as "the harder generation" an elite "which has voluntarily undertaken an ascetic existence and is accustomed to silence". This leads him to the final misguided assertion that "national-socialism was national-bolshevism plus noise and darkened counsel". How is it, that although he saw the nihilistic and self-destructive nature of national-socialism, he saw it specifically in national-bolshevist terms? The answer is that he generalises from what remains a segment of the movement but a limited segment nonetheless. He himself knew of the ideological objections of Hitler to "Prussian socialism" and "national-bolshevism". In his conversations of 1933 Hitler had told him, in what seemed a fairly direct reference to Juenger:

"These beliefs in the supranational worker's state with production plans and production districts can only come out of the misguided over-rationalised brains of a literary clique that has lost its sound instincts."⁶⁹

Despite this however, Rauschning had witnessed enough evidence of the favourability of Juengerian conceptions among intellectuals, army officers, party members and the like, to conclude that despite Hitler's own position, the infrastructural basis of the revolution would eventually undermine its leader's own position. Among his accounts of enthusiasts of technology, he mentions the extraordinary freelance fantasising of his close party colleague Erich Koch, Gauleiter of East Prussia. Koch had set up a planning institute headed by a young professor of economics, at the University of Koenigsberg, with party approval. Its task was to map out the possibilities of creating planned landscapes over the whole of Eastern Europe. Its proponents envisaged a European land-mass free from national boundaries, which could become the basis of a technological empire. Here "planning chambers would take the place of the parliaments of the past", technology would generate totally calculable forms of human behaviour, and "human inadequacy was finally to be destroyed".⁷⁰ It was the same Koch for whom Rauschning was acting as emissary when his conversations with Hitler took place. Hitler's answers were therefore guarded for the tactical motive of keeping in favour with the most distant of his Northern Gauleiters. Nonetheless his response to Rauschning's suggestion of planned landscapes in the East was unequivocal. "Only one can rule", he stated. "If we want to rule, we must first conquer Russia. After that Koch can go on carrying out his 'planned landscapes'. Not before."⁷¹ While Rauschning fled to the west, Koch remained to play his part in the Nazi version of the Drang nach Osten. He became the Governor of Ukraine and acted like the leader of a slave state. Though he was very much his own master, resisting the encroachments of the S.S. on the one hand and Rosenberg's ineffectual Ostministerium on the other, everything that remained of his planned landscapes was submerged in mass slaughter and racial

liquidation. In the execution of the Kommissarbefehl and the Final Solution, no blackboard planning could match the crude imperialistic impetus of gangsterish squabbles over extermination.

Rauschning in fact selected Juenger's work as the Leitmotif of Nazi nihilism because in reality no guiding theme seemed to exist. Hitler made no secret of his hatred of the Jews but he also made no mention of his plans for a final solution. One reason why Rauschning had obviously such a great interest in hearing the opinions of his leader was that few ideological guidelines had been laid down by the movement at all in the years prior to the seizure of power. The leadership principle created a vacuum into which many strands of revolutionary-nationalist doctrine were sucked. For national-socialism had no ideological core. While the communist party presented revolutionary-nationalists with the alien language of Marxism, Nazism presented them with no language at all. The official bible of national-socialism was Alfred Rosenberg's The Myth of the Twentieth Century. But its most notable quality was its obscurity. At the Nuremberg trials nearly all the party leaders testified to never having read it, Even Hitler himself took no interest in it. He confessed to finding it "too abstract" and contented himself with flipping through the pages.⁷² Other ideologues in the party like Gottfried Feder, its economic expert were politically ineffectual and largely ignored. On the whole, it was only the Prussian wing of the party which took ideological debate seriously and here the language of revolutionary-nationalism was most certainly an appealing one. But such a debate played little role in gaining the support of the masses. Here it was the simplified negativism of Goebbel's propaganda which ruled the day - anti-bolshevism, anti-capitalism, anti-semitism.

There was also a further motive in Rauschning's mistaken identification of nationalist theory and National-socialist practice. It lies in his ambivalent feelings about conservatism and revolution. Like many others, he claims to have joined the Nazi party from the conservative Right in order to gain control

over the irrational masses. He eventually repudiated its gangster methods and its lack of respect for authority and tradition. But he claimed nonetheless to believe in the idea of a conservative revolution. From a conservative standpoint he claims that a conservative revolution is the opposite of the revolution of nihilism.⁷³ But if he used Juenger as the archetype of German nihilism, he shirked a fundamental truth - namely that nihilism was a logical consequence of the conservative revolution. For Nazism, despite its crude gangster tactics, did not go so far as Juenger in its contempt for all forms of tradition. Rauschning, like Albert Speer in his recent memoirs, over-rated the Nazi subservience to technocracy. The slogan of "Blut und Boden" did possess a certain resonance. If any social stratum was ideologically favoured by the Nazi leadership, it was the peasantry. Walther Darre advocated colonisation of the east not through technology, but with a peasant squirearchy. Himmler was proud to recruit into the S.S. men of peasant stock. Hitler himself told Rauschning that he favoured the cunning of the peasant in preference to the urban proletarian. Christophe Steding the sickly free-wheeling ideologue who wrote himself into official favour with his rambling treatise Das Reich und der Krankheit der Europaischen Kultur was from a peasant background.⁷⁴ It was an intellectual clique of conservatives rather than the Nazis who betrayed conservatism most fundamentally. They did so however with a relentless logic which was intended to shatter the whole idea of conservatism while maintaining its reality in a concealed form. It was with this sentiment, found so strongly in national-bolshevism, with which Rauschning had first flirted and finally rejected. But having rejected it, he used it to defame Nazism, and to revert once more to a traditional conservative position. From this position, it was national-bolshevism rather than Nazism which was his greatest enemy. But as a conservative insider in German nationalism, nothing was easier for him to address his anti-Nazi audience by combining and confusing the two. It was for

this reason he claimed that Nazism after 1934 was undergoing its second "revolutionary-nationalist" phase when revolutionary-nationalism had already ceased to exist.

After 1934 in fact, Juenger's world of technology no longer mattered to him. While Niekisch carried out until 1935 a heroic and futile Prussian resistance to the Nazis which resulted in his eventual arrest, Juenger had already made his flight into a world of insects and flowers. Refusing to join the German Academy of Arts, writing to the Voelkische Beobachter to request that they refrain from quoting him without permission or acknowledgement, he retreated to the medieval town of Goslar in the Harz Mountains where he could find refuge from the Third Reich. Technology's advocate turned back to naturalism. Politically he became once more quiescent and traditionally conservative. His fable of the rise of Nazism On the Marble Cliffs⁷⁵ was published in 1939 and secretly acclaimed by opponents as an anti-Nazi tract. The authorities prevented it from further printing but did little to stop the circulation of the thirty-five thousand copies already published. Its message was ambiguous. While it had the courage to portray the violence of the Nazis, it did nothing to condemn it. While Juenger's literary talent allowed him to achieve an exceptional clarity of allegorical expression, its fictitious setting is that of a pastoral and medieval world. At points it reads like one of Grimm's fairy tales. Juenger's fascination with violence thus reestablishes itself as age-old, independent of modern war and modern life. It is written no longer with the eye of the professional murderer but with that of the distant aesthete. The compulsions of the storm-fighter are replaced by the compulsions of the voyeur. The atrocities of the Mauretians, the Nazi tribe are the subject of lengthy fascination and elegant descriptions. As Juenger himself says he watches "with the pleasure one finds in watching corrosions form as acid bites into dark mirrors of polished metal".⁷⁶ The result is that nothing emerges from Juenger's allegorical bloodbath of violence that could remotely be called

revulsion, horror or outrage.

In the novel he and his brother are threatened by the Mauretians (Nazis) in their naturalist retreat in Marina. They have become the very aesthetes and romantics whose impending liquidation Juenger had triumphantly forecast in Der Arbeiter through technology. But with one difference - persecution was timeless, and the persecutors a murdering criminal gang. Yet even then, when Juenger was emulating the Parisian aestheticism, he had previously so roundly condemned, there is still on the brink of disaster the recompense of that final feeling of inward metaphysical calm he had once experienced in the great slaughters of 1918:

"With the Mauretians absolute stillness reigned, as in the heart of a cyclone. They say that if one falls headlong into an abyss one sees things in minutest detail through a crystal clear lens. This - without the fear - was the vision which one acquired in the air of Mauretania, in an atmosphere that was poisoned through and through. At the very moment when terror reigned, coolness of thought and spiritual detachment increased. In the face of catastrophe good humour was everywhere and they would jest at it like the keeper of a gaming table at the loss of his clients."⁷⁷

Juenger's horrifying detachment and insensitivity to violence was due to his ability to conquer any other response to it. But the only other form of response he considered authentic was that of fear. Detachment and its perverted pleasures were the outcome of the total conquest of fear. But once fear had gone, nothing remained. Alone among the talented writers of the twentieth century Juenger seemed to have pushed to its further limits the paradox of sensibility utterly devoid of feeling. In spite of his rejection of Nazism all that finally separated the philosopher of violence from its plebian practitioners was the fastidious scorn of the snob. He nostalgically lamented the ritualism of fighting on which his own doctrine had poured scorn and which the Nazis had found dispensable. "The core of rough honour which had tempered violence was destroyed", he wrote, "and mere crime remained". He stayed on however to watch the violence of 'mere crime' whether in occupied Paris or on his tour of the Russian Front with the precise mathematical eye of a De Sade. For the front-fighter turned aesthete, the pornography of violence provided new and different attractions.

CHAPTER XIINOTES

1. Schwarz reports that Hitler's copy of Juenger's Feuer und Blut, now in the Library of Congress in Washington is underlined in several places. Schwarz op.cit. p.113
2. On the historical and political significance of the Bamberg conference see Dietrich Orlow "The conversion of myths into political power; the case of the Nazi party 1925-1926". American Historical Review April 1967 p.906ff.
3. Goebbels Early Diaries 19th April, 1926 p.80
4. Joseph Nyomarky Charisma and Factionalism in the Nazi Party 1918-1934 p.21f.
5. Hitler and I p.109ff
6. Hitler; ein deutsches Verhaengnis Berlin 1932 p.7 ff
7. ibid. p.13
8. See in particular Die Diktatur; Von den Anfaengen des modernen Souveranitaetsgedanken bis zum proletarische Klassenkampf (First published 1921) Berlin 1963; See also Schluchter op. cit. p.230 ff.
9. Cited in Epstein op. cit. p.342
10. Der Arbeiter p.145
11. Lenin, Machiavell des Ostens Hamburg 1933. Because it was published in 1933, Fischer's book was never distributed for political reasons.
12. Economy and Society ed. (Roth and Wittich) Vol. 3 p.1149 ff
13. Der Arbeiter p. 201
14. The Ordensbergen turned out however to be a distinctly ineffective enterprise. See Harald Scholtz "Die 'NS-ORDENSBERGEN'" Vierteljahreshefte fuer Zeitgeschichte 1967 p. 268 ff
15. Hermann Rauschnig Hitler Speaks p. 178 ff
16. Niekisch op. cit. p.26; an almost identical criticism is made by Weigand von Mittelberg (Herbert Blanck) in Adolf Hitler - Wilhelm III Berlin 1931 p.92 ff
17. "Reinheit der Mittel" in Widerstand Vol. 4 Oct. 1929 p.297 f
18. Das Reich p. 240 f
19. Niekisch op. cit. p.8
20. ibid. p.29
21. ibid. p.10
22. "Weiterentwicklung des totalen Staats in Deutschland" (1932) in Schmitt

- op.cit. p.187.
23. Staat, Bewegung, Volk, Hamburg 1933.
 24. "Ueber die drei Arten des Rechtswissenschaftlichen Denkens" in Schriften der Akademie fuer Deutsches Recht, p.6.
 25. "Das Fuehrer shuezt das Recht" in Schmitt op.cit., p.200.
 26. Staat, Bewegung, Volk, p.42.
 27. Schmitt was attacked by Gunter d'Alquen, editor of Das Schwarze Korps, the official S.S. magazine and by Otto Ohlendorf of the S. D. Hoehne op.cit. p.234.
 28. Best stated in 1939. "Whether the leadership's will is 'right', in other words whether it lays down rules of action which are both traducible and necessary is no longer a question of "law" but one of "destiny". If the leaders of the nation really misuse the right to lay down the law.... fate will mete out punishment to the nation more inexorably than any earthly judge and the punishment will be calamity, upheaval and collapse in the face of history". Die Deutsche Polizei cited in Buchheim et. al Anatomy of the S.S. State, p.130.
 29. "Das Boxheimer Dokument" reprinted in Das Parlament, vol.3, no.11 18th March, 1953.
 30. Cited in Curt Riess Joseph Goebbels, p.70-71
 31. See Bronnen's memoirs. Arnolt Bronnen gibt. zu Protokoll, p.188
 32. Gewagtes Leben, p.238 ff for Niekisch's account of the meetings with Goebbels.
 33. "Nationalismus und Nationalsozialismus" in Arminius, vol. 8, no.13, March 1927, p.9.
 34. The Answers, p.315
 35. Fuenzig Jahre unter Deutschen, p.286
 36. My Part in Germany's Fight (trans. of Von Kaiserhof zur Reichskanzlei by Dr. K. Fiedler) p.34.
 37. Les Ecrits Politiques de Heidegger, Paris 1968. In most respects unfortunately this book, by attempting to exonerate Juenger and Heidegger from the charge of Nazism, belongs to the ranks of the neo-conservative apologists.
 38. (The self-assertion of the German university) Breslau 1933.
 39. See his post-war tribute to Juenger On the Question of Being (Ueber das Seinsfrage), p.42-43, London, 1959.
 40. Alfred Baumler Maennerbund und Wissenschaft Berlin 1934 p.94
 41. Ernst Krieck Die Erneuerung der Universitaet Frankfurt Rectoral Address 23rd May 1933.

42. Baumer op.cit., pp.123, 143.
43. Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universitaeten, pp.16,21.
44. "Arbeitsdienst und Universitaet" Freiburger Studentenzeitung 20th June, 1933.
45. "Der Ruf zum Arbeitsdienst" ibid. 23rd January, 1934.
46. See William J. Richardson Heidegger: through Phenomenology to Thought The Hague, 1962, p. 132
47. Introduction to Metaphysics (trans. Ralph Mannheim) Yale 1959,p.199.
48. Alfred Krebs Tendenzen und Gestalten der N.S.D.A.P. Stuttgart 1959 p.35. See also Hans Gerd Schumann Nationalsozialismus und Gewerkschaftsbewegung, Hanover 1958
49. Krebs, p.70.
50. August Winnig Von Proletariat zum Arbeitertum Hamburg 1930. The Magazine of the N.S.B.O.(edited Reinhard Muchow)was in fact called Arbeitertum.
51. "Der Weg zur nationalen Arbeiterbewegung" in A. E. Guenther ed. Was Wir von Nationalsozialismus erwarten, Hamburg 1932 p.11f.
52. K. D. Bracher, W. Sauer, G. Schulz Die Nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung, pp. 387,518.
53. Das Wirtschaftliche Aufbauprogramme der N.S.D.A.P. (Speech to fifteen thousand members of the N.S.B.O. 20th October, 1932) Berlin 1932 p.3-4.
54. "Arbeit und Brot" Reichstagsrede, May 1932 in Kampf um Deutschland Munich 1932, p.348.
55. "Die Staatsidee des Nationalsozialismus" Rundfunkrede 14th July 1932. in Strasser ibid. p.381.
56. "Ueber dem Schmerz" p.176.
57. Der Arbeiter, p.274. For Juenger's explicit rejection of Marx's nineteenth century "mechanistic" and "rationalistic" conception of work see his review article of Richard Bie's Revolution um Karl Marx in Widerstand IV 1929, p.144-146.
58. ibid. p.286
59. Strasser op.cit p.17
60. "Deutscher Sozialismus" Die Tat March 1933, p.1007, 1111.
61. "Autoritaer oder was sonst?" ibid. p.1030.
62. "Die Etappe Papen" November, 1932.

63. See Rolf Boelke "Der Weg des Nationalsozialismus" Die Tat March 1933, p.879f.
64. The History of the Nazi Party 1919-1933 p.271ff. Strasser's relations with the Tat circle certainly contributed to his disfavour after his resignation. According to Alfred Krebs, Strasser had written an anonymous article on economic policy for Die Tat in the spring of 1932: (Das Ultimo ist das Schicksal; vol. XXIV April 1932 p.60ff). On discovering this Goebbels used it to discredit Strasser even further in Hitler's eyes and substantiate his allegations of treachery against his rival. For Goebbel's account of his conflict with Strasser over the question of coalition or total opposition see My Part in Germany's Fight p.179-185. Helmut Ellbrachter, Strasser's Nazi associate who joined the editorial board of Die Tat promoted a closer alignment of the magazine to Strasser's political strategy in his article "Wider den Sozialismus in jeder Form?" Die Tat July 1932 p.310f. Here he claimed that by the summer of 1932 the Nazis had exhausted all the reservoirs of bourgeois radicalism and would have to concentrate on converting the German workers to its cause.
65. This can be seen especially in the conflict between the German Labour Front and the Juengerian General Georg Thomas who advocated hardship and economic sacrifice in the push towards rearmament and total mobilisation. Ley's policies of attempting to satisfy the material wants of the workers was fully endorsed by Hitler himself. See Tim Mason "The Legacy of 1918 for National-Socialism" in A. Nicholls and E. Matthias ed. German Democracy and the Triumph of Hitler, p.215ff. For Ley's own crude propoganda account of the Labour Front see his Soldaten der Arbeit Berlin 1938.
66. "Was soll der Buerger tun?" Die Tat March 1933 p.1085.
67. Art against Ideology London 1968 p.158.
68. Die Revolution des Nihilismus (5th ed.) Zurich 1938. p.100-102. (The section on Juenger is omitted from the abridged English version Germany's Revolution of Destruction, trans. E.W. Dickes, London 1939).
69. Hitler Speaks p.136
70. Makers of Destruction, p.195
71. Hitler Speaks p.133
72. Hitler's Table Talk, p.544.
73. Make or Break with the Nazis; Notes on a Conservative Revolution, p.63.
74. See the biographical portrait of Steding by Walter Frank in Das Reich und die Krankheit der europaeischen Kultur p.XIII-XLVII Hamburg 1938.

75. Auf die Marmorklippen Hamburg 1939. (English translation On Cliffs of Marble 2nd ed. London 1970). At least two of the characters apart from Juenger and his brother bear affinities to members of Juenger's circle. The priest Father Lampros is a fairly recognisable portrait of Hielscher. Bracquemart, the (Nazi) Mauretian who challenges his own leader and is killed with his hounds in a bloody slaughter bears some resemblance to Werner Best. The novel itself came out during the period when Best began to have his disagreements with Heydrich. It seems quite likely however that Bracquemart's revolt against the Chief Ranger (Hitler) was a fictional conceit or a piece of wishful thinking, rather than the revelation of a master-plot. Nonetheless the description of Bracquemart throws light not only (possibly) on Best, but on Juenger himself, to whom the following criticisms might equally apply:

"Bracquemart we knew from earlier days, but we had seen him only fleetingly for he was always on his travels.... Like all those who hunger after power and mastery, he was led astray by his wild dreams into the realm of Utopias. It was his opinion that from the beginning of history there had been two races of men on earth - the masters and the slaves - and they had been crossed.... It may seem noteworthy that in this affair Bracquemart wanted to confront the Ranger, although there was much in common in their ways of thought and action. Yet there was a difference to this degree, that the Ranger had in mind to people the Marina with wild beasts, while Bracquemart looked on it as land to besetled with slaves and their overlords. At bottom the question revolved round one of the internal conflicts between Mauretians which it is not possible to resolve here....

As far as Bracquemart is concerned, he bore the unmistakable stamp of nihilism in its later stages.... he conceived of life as the mechanism of a clock, and therefore in force and in terror he saw the gears which drive the timepiece of life.... Creation had died in his heart, and he had reconstructed it like a mechanical toy. The flowers which blossomed on his brow were blooms of ice....

In his thinking he took life for his model, and was insistent that thoughts should be armed with tooth and claw. Yet his theories were the product of distillation, and in the process the true vital force was lost; they lacked a precious ingredient - the rich abundance which alone imparts a saviour. The dominant quality of his plans was aridness, although there was no error to be found in his logic. Similarly the trueness of a bell is lost through an invisible fault in the casting. The reason was that with him power was too much a matter of the intellect, and found too little expression in grandezza, in native désinvolture. In this respect the chief Ranger had the better of him, for he wore his power like a good old hunting jacket that fitted him the better the oftener it was steeped in mire and blood. For this reason I had the impression that Bracquemart was about to embark upon an ill-fated venture, in such encounters the theorist has always been worsted by the man of action."

On Cliffs of Marble, pp.80-83.

76. *ibid.* p.34 (English translation)
77. *ibid.* p.54-55.

CHAPTER XIIIThe Expiration and the Legacy.

After 1933, revolutionary-nationalism ceased to exist. Like all the other political doctrines which it had so ferociously opposed liberalism, Marxism, social democracy, traditional conservatism, it was victim of the empty self-proclaimed National-Socialist World-view which substituted for doctrine its beloved leader, its hatred of Jewry, and the delusion of the German people as a master race. Revolutionary-Nationalism thus expired with the expiration of its greatest enemies. Otto Strasser left Germany but was hounded outside it by the S.S. His brother was shot during the purge of the S.A. in 1934. Hans Zehrer left politics altogether as Die Tat, shorn of its critical voice limped on for several more years before disappearing. The heroic and futile opposition of Niekisch resulted in his eventual imprisonment. He was saved from execution through the intervention of Mussolini of all people. Juenger and Hielscher were left alone and also saved from execution - this time by Best after the disaster of Stalingrad. Hielscher was arrested by the Nazis after the assassination attempt on Hitler in 1944. But Juenger although an officer in Paris under the very Wehrmacht Generals who were most in favour of the plot, declined to participate. Practically all Juenger's circle had the fortune - or misfortune - to outlive Hitler, and to protest as loudly as possible the strength of their "hostility" to Nazism. Juenger became a pan-European and a catholic; Niekisch temporarily tried the East but suffered at the hands of the new Prussian bolshevists of the D.D.R, who unsportingly toed the party line and started to censor his books.

Stalin's Russia had finally become a technological world-empire and made Juenger's writing a prophecy half come true. But it was inundated with the tedious and endless dialectical language of Communist Party officialdom which he abhorred. Having had little to say while Nazism was triumphant, the remnants of revolutionary-nationalism had even less to say now that it was finished. As their various memoirs testify, they had little genuine criticism of the Nazis. Some of the national-bolsheviks such as Niekisch and Harro Schulzé-Boysen, who joined the Rote Kapelle resistance movement, did show courage and defiance. At the same time they had been converted to Marxism. The majority of revolutionary-nationalists opted to stay west of the Iron Curtain.

What then is the legacy of a doctrine which collapsed as a political movement? It is that, while never politically influential it retained a ring of prophecy about some of the developments in the post-war era. Under the iron rule of the most authoritarian of all the East European communist parties the German Democratic Republic represented a marriage of sorts between Prussianism and Bolshevism. In the Cold War, technology, as Juenger prophesied, was organised on a global basis for the purposes of military defence and destruction. Moreover because history seemed to have borne out some of its prophecies, it made an impact, though not an altogether explicit one, upon the development of German social thought. Though Friedrich Georg Juenger came to express a severe disillusionment with technology after the war,¹ Hiedegger credited his brother's theory with having produced a restatement of the theory of the will-to-power appropriate to the modern technological age.² Moreover in other intellectual circles,

Juenger and Schmitt's work was taken as the central yardstick of totalitarian irrationalism in the technological world. This is true in particular of its treatment by the Frankfurt School of Sociology, which has proceeded in its work under the banner of "Critical Theory". Early essays by Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse written in the years immediately after the Nazi seizure of power attribute to revolutionary-nationalism a central role in the development of the Nazi ideology and the policy of the Third Reich. Marcuse for example describes Nazism - and by implication fascism as a whole - in the following way:

"The establishment of the total-authoritarian state was accompanied by the annunciation of a new political world-view; heroic-voelkisch realism became the governing theory.... The new world-view is a great reservoir for all the currents that have been deluging "liberalist" political and social theory since World War I." 3

They had in effect drawn the same mistaken conclusion of Rauschning. They had inserted revolutionary-nationalism into the empty ideological core of the Nazi movement. But they had gone further. They both viewed "heroic realism" not only as the ideology of Nazism but as the culmination of philosophical irrationalism in European thought.⁴ It was heir to the revolt against reason inaugurated by Nietzsche and Bergson with their vitalist philosophy of life. While avoiding the disastrous assumption of Lukacs' work on the "destruction of reason" which ended up tracing the emergence of Hitler back to Schelling, there nonetheless remained among the left-Hegelians a firm conviction that European thought had ended in the disaster of Nazism. In retrospect the figures of Thomas Mann and Max Weber were to stand for Lukacs and Marcuse respectively as the swansong of the bourgeois age. The German emigrés from Frankfurt felt themselves to be limbo after 1933 - perhaps a form of afterlife in which it became impossible to countenance even in the West any continuance of classic bourgeois liberalism. Yet their feelings

towards the irrationalism which had destroyed it were ambivalent. Horkheimer admitted that he shared some of the irrationalist hostility towards the analytical rationalism and atomic individualism of Western philosophy. But from a Hegelian standpoint, the irrationalist abandonment of historical reason had been intolerable. Heroic realism in particular had used its rejection of bourgeois individualism as the pretext for the irrational call to violence and sacrifice. Moreover it had modernised nineteenth century irrationalism by applying it to technology. This according to Horkheimer was particularly evident in the work of Spengler and Juenger. Here "reason and technology unite above all under the concept of sacrifice. The ethos of work, which incorporates this positive relation to rational powers is itself irrational."⁵ Horkheimer accepted Juenger's contention that "technology is of cultic origin which has unique symbols at its disposal and behind whose operations a power-struggle between Gestalts is concealed".⁶

Juenger's technological slave-utopia in fact provided an important conceptual pillar for Marcuse and Horkheimer's work on the nature of Western technology. For it gave an account, to them at least, of the irrational nature of rational technology. But they arrived at this position through an amazing process of distortion. Whereas Juenger's vision was a dream of slavery he thought bourgeois society incapable of creating, Marcuse ascribes it to the very basis of bourgeois society. Whereas Juenger's vision of a technological "worker's state" has its most recognizable model in Stalin's Russia, Marcuse identified it with western capitalism. Moreover he identified it with what he regarded as the most advanced form of monopoly capitalism in the west - Germany under Hitler. It was an identification which could only be made by

regarding Juenger, like Rauschning had done, as a Nazi thinker. The result of this is that Marcuse explains the development of Nazism in purely Juengerian terms. It occurs when "merely partial mobilisation" is no longer enough and "total mobilisation" is required to subject the individual to "the discipline of the authoritarian state". Concerning the Nazi destruction of culture Marcuse also took his cue from Juenger. Total mobilisation was the key to the destruction of those "progressive aspects of culture centred around the idea of the personality".⁷ The point here is not merely that Marcuse was historically inaccurate in regarding Germany in 1937 as a country of total mobilisation. (It did not achieve total mobilisation until 1943 when the war was already lost). It is that Marcuse is guilty of extreme hypostatization. For no good reason, Juenger's national-bolshevik wish-dream re-emerges as the reality of modern capitalism in its most advanced form. That form is identified with fascism. The dye had already been cast for Marcuse's attack on western technology.

This attack comes three decades later in the book which ast him into the political limelight after a lifetime of relative anonymity - One-Dimensional Man. By this time Marcuse had revised a number of earlier assumptions. The ascetic and sacrificial dimensions of heroic realism were no longer appropriate to a mass consumer society reared in the wake of the Keynesian revolution. The domination of technology over man no longer took place in a situation of scarcity but in a situation of abundance. Moreover another influence had firmly shaped itself upon Marcuse's writings. It was that of Freud. This time the influence was totally positive. Marcuse confronted the reality principle of modern life with the pleasure principle based on genital sexuality. He placed Eros against Thanatos. In the technological

age however he regarded it necessary to locate the destructive nature of the aggressive instinct within the apparatus of technology itself. In his book one sees an epic combat between two forms of Bergsonian élan vital - libidinal energy and the concealed will-to-power of totalitarian technology. The latter Marcuse claimed, in a tone of resignation and cultural despair which he had taken from his enemies of a bygone era, was almost invariably the winner. The domination of technology is totally Juengerian in content and dimension:

"By virtue of the way in which it has organised its technological base, contemporary society tends to be totalitarian.... technological rationality reveals its political character as it becomes the great vehicle of better domination, creating a truly totalitarian universe in which society and nature, mind and body are kept in a state of permanent mobilisation for the defence of this universe". 8

The import of this is made clearer in Marcuse's speech on Max Weber at Heidelberg in 1965, where he misleadingly attributes to Weber the components of a technological rationality outlined by Juenger after Weber's death. It lies in the concept of technical reason. Marcuse reads into it not only Juenger's concept of technology but also Heidegger's interpretation of that concept. In Heidegger's existential formulation technology was the mystical source of a tranquil Being, whose active expression in the real world was restless, destructive and nihilistic.⁹ It is self-closed, out of reach, exploiting technological rationality, dominating man, but itself inaccessible to reason. Marcuse places this Heideggerian mystification of Being at the basis of the modern Western World:

"The very concept of technical reason is itself perhaps ideological. Not only the application of technology but technology itself is domination (of nature and men) - methodical scientific, calculated calculating control. Specific purposes and interests of domination are not foisted upon technology subsequently and from the outside; they enter the construction of the technical apparatus. Technology is always a historical-social project; it is interested in what a society and its ruling interests intend to do with men and things. Such a purpose of domination is substantive and belongs to the very form of technical reason." 10

The link with Juenger at this point becomes clear. Technical reason is part of the Gestalt of one-dimensional man, in the same way that technology is the means by which the Gestalt of the worker mobilises the world for destruction. The worker becomes one-dimensional man.

The relevance of Marcuse's critique to the Cold War and the possibilities of global destruction cannot be underestimated. But its originality can be questioned. Among Juenger's post-war writings one can find some attempt to update his own vision. Space-travel is the adventure of the modern worker; the power-blocs confronting each other with nuclear weapons, Juenger gleefully compares to children playing with matches in a burning barn.¹¹ Juenger's wish-dream is Marcuse's nightmare. But the same nightmare is identified with western reality. Democracy is merely a window-dressing. Freedom is a function of "repressive tolerance". All thought is subordinate to the demands of technology. Juenger's seminal suggestion for the enslavement of knowledge and language are developed by Marcuse into a frontal assault on Western philosophy. Technology had been at the source of Juenger's 'revolution sans phrase.' It now stood at the source of "the closing of the universe of discourse". Like Roland Barthes Marcuse claims that "the closed language does not demonstrate and explain - it communicates decision dictum and command."¹² But this para-language of technical reason has a familiar context. It is the same as the military analogy of "soldierly style" used by Juenger thirty years previously. Much as he protests against it, Marcuse can only do so with a convoluted Hegelian dialectic which seems to derive its momentum from its own aridity. Unlike Orwell, he has not mastered the secret of doublespeak. Unlike Lukacs, Marcuse is a Hegelian who does not understand modern literature. He reduces poetry to a purely cognitive conceit. The verbosity of Eros is scholastic wind. Reading One-Dimensional Man as a plea for the conservation of language in the face of silence, one is reminded how much the inflation

of language is its other disease. In the global market place of the twentieth century Zarathustra would probably cry out "Language is dead!" But its destroyers would have already scooped him.

In his other main focus of attack - namely the instrumentalism of modern science, Marcuse presents us less with an attack upon the usage of science by military or governmental establishments, than upon the epistemological basis of modern science itself. His attack is different in kind both from that of C. Wright Mills and Noah Chomsky and should not be viewed in the same light. For Marcuse science is vulnerable to political control for epistemological reasons. Its main defect in his eyes is what Arthur Koestler has called "the vanishing act"¹³ inherent in the discovery of the theories of relativity and indeterminacy and in the failure of all traditional concepts of nature matter, substance, particle, mass and even energy to withstand the assault of mathematical physics. For this reason philosophers like Russell had been stimulated to suggest that we could only know the mathematical properties of the universe; scientists like Jeans claimed that the cosmos approximated more to the structure of a universal mind rather than a universal machine.¹⁴ The modern philosophy of science dismissed at one blow the nineteenth century materialism which not only underlay scientific thinking but also social thought. It was also unamenable to the suggestion of an immanent dialectic in history, especially since the assumption of a four dimensional continuum in relativity theory had wrecked most orthodox philosophical concepts of time and duration. To what type of modern philosophy does modern science prove amenable? One possible answer was the existential concept of Being. Carl von Weiszaecker stressed the greater relevance of

Heidegger's concept of Being to the discoveries of modern atomic physics than the Cartesian dualism of Res cogitans and Res Extensa. The indivisibility of Being in space or time had in fact been stressed more by Parmenides, the pre-Socratic, than by Heidegger, his German follower, who is a philosopher of mind.¹⁶ But the abandonment by modern science of rigid distinctions between mind and body and space and time, which prompted Giorgio di Santillana to call Einstein a "true Eleatic" certainly reinstated the feasibility of regarding the cosmos as unified indivisible Being.

The abandonment of the concept of determinism, the problematic nature of time-sequences, the uncertainty relations of quantum theory has destroyed science as the sole and unquestionable yardstick of absolute truth. Even in 1932 the consequences of this had not been lost on Juenger. He used the idea that only the mathematical properties of nature can be known as an analogy for his model of technological domination. The relationship of the worker to his Gestalt, he claimed was that "of the mathematical to the metaphysical". But this was not a serious analogue. It was an act of political cynicism. It was an attempt to exploit a principle of uncertainty. The Gestalt was mythical, not scientific and this accounted for its devaluation of history. For Marcuse on the other hand, the refusal of scientific philosophers to adopt some yardstick of absolute truth is a disaster, because it makes them vulnerable to instrumentalism. If science has no ultimate rationality, it can be put to any political purposes. But what is his alternative? It could only be that science immunises itself by adopting a mythology of absolute certainty which in no way corresponds to modern scientific discovery. In human history this is provided by dialectic reason. In nature there is no equivalent. Marcuse's attack

is thus on the absence of scientific omniscience, that same absence which Juenger saw as a principle of totalitarian domination. But for the latter its rationale was a debased act of freewill. It was decisionistic. Viewing the modern age as the age in which man's ideals were constantly betrayed by his failure to live up to them, Juenger took this to its logical conclusion. He claimed that it was possible to betray all ideals in advance by debasing them in one's own mind.

"The best answer to the betrayal of the spirit by life if the betrayal of the spirit by the spirit; and it is one of the cruellest pleasures of our time to participate in the work of destruction." 17

In his own account of technology Marcuse reifies this voluntary act of devaluation into a totally determinate technical reason. When he writes that "the technological a priori becomes a political a priori" ¹⁸ he argues that the principle of uncertainty capitulates before pure instrumentalism and the scientist becomes the slave of politics. But politicians control scientific research for more obvious and straightforward reasons than this, and the epistemology of modern science really makes very little difference. If anything its vanishing act would make it potentially subversive to accepted ideas of order, Marcuse's objections therefore can only be understood as part of a conflict en famille in German idealist philosophy. To cede cryptically to German existentialism the doubtful privilege of being the ideology of western technology is a typical hypostatization in Marcuse's own brand of Hegelian idealism. But, even if it does conjure up the rather odd vision of Heidegger hiding somewhere in the White House, it explains very little.

In the battle between Left-hegelianism and Right-existentialism for the soul of modern technology, what to paraphrase Marcuse, are

"the chance of the Hegelian alternatives?" The awkward and rather discordant feature of Marcuse's analysis is the attempt to fuse totalitarian domination with a liberal ideology of technological progress. He admits that technology can alleviate poverty and disease and stimulate the condition for widespread prosperity. Yet it demands totalitarian organisation. But since totalitarianism resides in technology and not in the political regime and its forms of control over social life, there is little political or historical discussion to be found in Marcuse. But having criticised technology so vehemently, he still remains utopian about its prospects. This above all testifies to his popularity at least for a short period of time with a New Left temporarily disillusioned with the working-class and disgusted by the entropic "end-of-ideology" thesis purveyed by many liberal academics. Is he therefore something of a twentieth century St-Simon? At first sight it might seem so. Closer investigation reveals however that unlike St. Simon he does not reject metaphysics in his search for a technological utopia. In fact he seeks an alliance between science and metaphysics.¹⁹ That alliance cast in Hegelian trappings as the Aufhebung of the totalitarian world, conforms almost precisely to the demands made by Schmitt and Juenger for the inauguration of the totalitarian world. There is an uncanny sense of *déjà vu*. Marcuse, like Schmitt before him, tries to rescue technology decisionistically from the grasp of 'progress'. At the same time he claims to be moving away from totalitarianism and not towards it. It is like seeing a familiar film being played backwards with the sound track still running forwards.

In the 'film' Marcuse claims that "the scientific transformation of the world" contains the basis for its "metaphysical transcendence". The condition for this is "the completion of technological rationality". Once this is achieved the way is open for the pure "quantification of values" through technology:

".... This (transcendence) does not mean the revival of values, spiritual or other, which are to supplement the scientific transformation of man and nature. On the contrary the historical achievement of science and technology has rendered possible the translation of values into technical tasks. Consequently what is at stake is the redefinition of values in technical terms, as elements in the technological process.... From the quantification of secondary qualities, science would proceed to the quantification of values." 20

Marcuse sees technology, therefore, as being beyond good and evil.

The quantification of values can only signify the abolition of values through a technological metaphysic. Technology is not the basis of a better life. It is that better life. Art science and eros are all subordinated to it. They become part of "the revalidation of metaphysics" which accompanies technological transformation. In other words, they are the handmaidens of a metaphysical technology. Marcuse's utopia, therefore, is almost identical with Juenger's - but with one crucial difference. It is bereft of the will-to-power. It is based instead on "the pacified existence" of humanity.²¹ Therefore it is no longer destructive and nihilistic because it has conquered the tendencies to domination inherent in technology.

But how is it possible for the will-to-power to disappear since the whole point of Juenger's metaphysic was the assertion of total domination? The answer must be found in the other influence on Marcuse - that of Freud. Marcuse identified in the destructiveness of technology, the manifestation of the aggression instinct. Unlike Freud who, in Civilisation and its Discontents, was sceptical about the elimination of aggression from human behaviour, Marcuse, like other non-Freudians, claimed that it could under the right social circumstances be supplanted by the sex-instinct. But it seems unlikely that Freud would have followed them. Thomas Mann has suggested a direct link between Freud and Nietzsche and Schopenhauer²² and the theory of the

unconscious certainly owes something not only to the will-to-power but to Schopenhauer's more metaphysical portrait of the restless will asserting itself destructively in the real world in order to achieve tranquility. Freud assumed aggression to be a constant and fundamental feature of man, although as a rationalist he assumed that under many circumstances it could be mastered. Marcuse's 'pacification of existence' is a Freudian quest for mastery over aggression and the will-to-power. He speaks of "linking liberation and mastery". But how is it possible to master aggression and power and at the same time escape from their own shadow? Marcuse's answer is cognitive mastery - the power of rational cognition to eliminate the irrational. Freud had already established the psychoanalytical cure. Marcuse wants to indulge in the therapy of the social. He demands the "rational" application of psychoanalysis to those who persist in vivid and morbid imaginings and fail to recognise "the scientific rational character of imagination" (sic).²³ In the same way he wants to eliminate all "irrational resistance" to centralised social planning. Marcuse's idea of technology is the planned rational mastery of the irrational. But in so doing it relies entirely upon the fundamental nihilist premise of that irrationalism - the abolition of values.

Marcuse's work thus comes full circle. He dreams about creating the technology he wishes to abolish. Technology is not finally transcended. It recurs. In the language of that philosophical tradition of which Marcuse is a part, Becoming attempts to supercede Being but is finally supplanted by it. But what, one might ask, has happened to the Will-to-Power? Even if Marcuse wants to translate values into technical tasks at least he wants to abolish the will-to-power as well? In his correspondence with Freud, Arnold Zweig, the novelist, claimed that Analysis has accomplished all the feats reserved by Nietzsche for the will-to-power. It "had reversed all values, conquered Christianity,

disclosed the true Antichrist". Freud had discovered the world that Nietzsche had longed for - a world beyond Good and Evil. Zweig continues "You have attained what Nietzsche would have gladly achieved himself; the scientific description and explanation of the human soul." ²⁴

For Zweig this was to be the basis for a monumental study on the two great men. Freud replied "I don't need to read it. You could write it when I am no longer here and you are haunted by the memory of me." Like one of his patients, Freud consciously resisted the truth of his unconscious. For had he not broken down the will-to-power into its elementary particles? Had he not split the atom?

NOTESCHAPTER XIII

1. Friedrich Georg Juenger The Failure of Technology Chicago 1948.
2. On the Question of Being, p.16ff.
3. Negations Chap.1. p.3. (Trans. from "Der Kampf gegen den Liberalismus in der totalitaeren Staatsauffassung" in Zeitschrift fuer Sozialforschung, vol. 3, 1934, p.184ff.)
4. See Max Horkheimer "Zum Rationalismustreit in der Gegenwaertigen Philosophie" Zeitschrift fuer Sozialforschung, 1934, p.42f.
5. *ibid.* p.6.
6. Der Arbeiter, p.161; cited *ibid.* p.44.
7. Negations Chap.3 (originally published in Zeitschrift fuer Sozialforschung, vol. 6, 1937) p.124ff.
8. One-Dimensional Man, Boston 1966 p18.
9. See Heidegger *op.cit* and also Holzwege Frankfurt 1950 p.234ff. On Heidegger's mystification of Being, his use of neologism and his abuse of ordinary language, see Karl Loewith Heidegger; Denker in Duerftiger Zeit p.13ff. Loewith remarks in a very salutary manner "It would be a holy miracle, if his definition of the love of Being or, say, the essence of technology as that of vor-, her-, and be-stellbaren Gestell were ever to be translated into English". *ibid.*, p.15.
10. "Industrialism and Capitalism in Max Weber" in Negations p.223-224.
11. "Vom Ende des geschichtlichen Zeitalters" in Martin Heidegger zum Siebzigsten Geburtstag Tuebingen 1959 p.337.
12. One-Dimensional Man, p.84ff.
13. Arthur Koestler The Sleepwalkers p.528ff.
14. Sir James Jeans The Mysterious Universe London 1937 p.122f. See also Werner Heisenberg The Physicist's Conception of Nature, p.32ff.
15. "Beziehungen der theoretischen Physik zum Denken Heideggers" in Martin Heideggers Einfluss auf die Wissenschaften, p.172f.

16. See Giorgio di Santillana "Prologue to Parmenides" in Reflections on Men and Ideas Santillana claims that it is false on the part of the German philosophy of history to regard Parmenides as the founder of ontology and its anti-scientific attitude. "... who would imagine Fichte, Heidegger or Hegel proceeding (like Parmenides) from cryptic statements on Being and Non-Being to a treatise concerning the mechanism of the planets and the illumination of the moon, or the sterility of mules?" p.83.
17. Der Arbeiter, p.37
18. Marcuse op.cit. p.154. It is no coincidence that Marcuse's debate is most specifically with the German philosophy of science and notably with Weizaecker and Werner Heisenberg. He caps his argument for the contemporary subordination of science to technology with a quote from Heidegger's Holzwege "Modern man takes the entirety of Being as raw material for production and subjects the entirety of the object-world to the sweep and order of production (Herstellen).... the use of machinery and the production of machines is not technics itself but merely an adequate instrument for the realisation (Einrichtung) of the essence of technics in its objective raw material" (Marcuse's translation) p.266f. Marcuse's association of the findings of modern mathematical physics with the subjective experience of despair and absurdity is not an isolated one. Walter Benjamin, the gifted literary critic associated with the Frankfurt School compares Eddington's description of the nature of the physical world with the fictional world of Franz Kafka and claims that the recent revelations of modern physics were conveyed to Kafka through mystical experience and mystical tradition. See Benjamin's Illuminations, p.141ff.
19. *ibid.* p.229
20. *ibid.* p.231-232.
21. *ibid.* pp.16, 250
22. See his study Schopenhauer, p.79ff.
23. *ibid.* p.249.
24. The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Arnold Zweig (Zweig to Freud 2 December 1930; Freud's reply 7th December) pp.22-25.

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ERRATA

- Page 21 line 2. For is read his
- p 69 " 3. For iniating read initiating
- p 68 " 2. For Chistian read Christian
- pl04 " 12. For histroical read historical
- pl07 " 17 For revels read rebels
- pl35 " 26 For Hanz read Hans
- pl22 " 6 For leterature read literature
- pl36 " 1 For no read not
- pl40 " 7 For Franfurt read Frankfurt
- pl41 " 15 For interrupted read interpreted
- pl52 " 25 For 800 read 8,000
- pl67 " 31 For if read it
- pl74 " 13 For some read none
- pl79 " 20 For what that read was that
- pl79 " 21 For furtherest read furthest
- pl88 Note 7 For Eschmann used the "Leopold Dingraeve"
read Eschmann used the name "Leopold
Dingraeve"
- pl86 Note 29 For ransk read ranks
- pl90 line 14 For nihialation read nihilation
- pl91 " 9 For all read an
- p208 " 2 For submaries read submarines
- p 212 " 36 For in which had read in which it had
- p220 " 19 For fiarly read fairly
- p231 " 28 For primorial read primordial
- p235 " 24 For socialogical read sociological
- p236 " 11 For Marxism read Marxist
- p279 " 12 For the read The
- p298 " 17 For Behaviøus read behaviour
- p300 " 25 For whoever read whoever
- p305 " 7 For dehamanisation read dehumanisation
- p305 " 18 For which had read which he had

ERRATA (cont.)

- p 358 line 43 For saviour read savour
- p 368 " 2 For Res cogitans and Res Extensa read
res cogitans and res extensa
- p 387 " 6 For Munzenberg read Muenzenberger
- p 390 " 8 For SCHWEBE read SCHWABE